



# PDFBOOKSFREE.PK

## 365 Stories

Every day is a *special day* for  
a *special story*.



## *An Important Request*

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته

To our respected readers

الحمد لله, we have finally completed this book and we would like you all to know that we have tried our best to print this book with correct references and without errors so that whatever is stated is authentic and referenced. However, to err is human, and so, should you find any mistake, room for further improvement or if you have any suggestions or comments, please write to us about it so that we can make sure that the next print is error free. الحمد لله, a lot of effort has gone into the editing and designing of this book and we hope that our readers will be happy with the result and pray for the acceptance of our endeavours.

جَزَاكَ اللهُ خَيْرًا

Waiting for your precious suggestions,

Bait-ul-Ilm Trust

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*inspiring, instructive, informative & interesting*

# 365 Stories

Part - 5

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## *The Perfect Gift*

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته

What is the best gift that a Muslim can give to another Muslim?

Do you know that the best gift to give to your Muslim brethren is knowledge about religious affairs? If you feel, after reading this book, that it can benefit your family, friends, business relations, schools, colleges and others; then send them this book. This will ensure:

1. That you will be practicing the hadith - "تهادوا تحابوا" which means - "Exchanging gifts will increase mutual love".
2. That you will be investing in your hereafter as well as dispensing your duty to your Muslim brethren
3. That you will get the blessings of promoting knowledge and religious information.

Therefore, try to make this book available to as many people as you can. Send a copy to your local Masjid, library, clinic and school to fulfil your religious duty.

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## A Word from the Publisher

Dear friends,

Allah ﷻ has informed us of the past nations, the good and the bad people. This has been done so that we know what is right and what is wrong, and this helps us be better people. The way good people lived and the blessings showered on them inspires us to do the same, while reading about the punishments on the sinners makes an intelligent person think and try to keep away from such deeds.

Therefore, reading about the incidents and stories from the lives of Prophets ﷺ and noble people influences us to perform good deeds. Hazrat Junaid Baghdadi رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ said that stories are an army from the armies of Allah ﷻ and that through these; Allah ﷻ gives peace of heart and steadfastness on faith.

Allah ﷻ says,

“We narrate to you all such stories from the events of the messengers as We strengthen your heart therewith.” (Hud: 120)

Rasulullah ﷺ has stressed on the education and upbringing of children. A few Hadith say the following:-

- 1- Teach your sons swimming.
- 2- Teach your subordinates Surah Yousuf.
- 3- Teach your children to read Salaat when they are seven years old.

There are numerous other Ahadith as well as stories from the life of Rasulullah ﷺ.

That place great importance on the education and upbringing of children.

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Alhamdulillah, the Baitul Ilm Trust has published many books in Urdu and English like the Zouqo-Shouq Series, Storytime and Bedtime Stories. And now, dear friends, another series is here with a total of 365 stories so that you have at least one story or interesting read to satisfy your appetite every day.

You will read in these stories about the greatness of Allah ﷻ, the love for Rasulallah ﷺ, good manners, respect of parents and elders, firmness and courage. This book has stories, facts, jokes and quotes. I am grateful to Hafiz Muhammad Ahsan and Brother Asim Bharoocha, and I request you all to remember me and them in your prayers.

Yours sincerely

Muhammad Hanif Abdul Majeed

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## 365 STORIES (PART-5)

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### Pardon me

“Someone told me that you are educated...why settle for a meagre shop like this one? Why don't you find a job somewhere?”

Asim looked over the speaker. The latter wore an expensive suit. His face looked honest and engaging. He had not seen this stranger before in the neighbourhood.

“You are new to the neighbourhood...?” Asim started.

“Sure, but you haven't answered me.”

“Well, I did just that but after several years of hard effort and after encountering bribery and favouritism everywhere I decided to sell a few things and open this shop. That was the day when I was rid of my troubles. Now I pray five times a day and express my gratitude to Allah.”

“Whatever you have said cannot be disputed. But if you so desire I can arrange for employment for you, such that people can only dream of.”

“I will never bribe anyone. Short of that I am willing.”

“The employment will be outside the country. You will earn around Rs. 50,000 monthly, far more than you would here.”

“Well my expenses are met easily by Rs. 4 or 5 thousand. However, I am not prepared to leave my country for work.”

### 365 STORIES (PART-5)

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“What? You would turn down such an amazing opportunity? Why would you want to stay here? There is nothing here for you. No one cares about you here. Here, there is injustice and oppression and the rights of the poor are trampled upon. The governments care only about themselves. They are busy stuffing their pockets while the ordinary man lies starving in the street. And still you want to stay here...?”

“Sure I do. If I find employment in my country I would surely undertake it even it though it pays 10,000 rupees. And I wouldn't work outside the country even if it pays a million rupees.”

“What?!?” stared the stranger, with his mouth agape, “But why?”

“Well...before this country of ours came into being our forefathers gave countless sacrifices. Then when the country was created and people migrated here, so much blood was shed that the cruelty of Genghis Khan pales by comparison. My own parents and brothers perished in the carnage. This country is the fruit of all those sacrifices. Would you have it that I forgot all those sacrifices and left my country to serve those very people who perpetrated that outrage?” Asim's emotion was visible, “No! I would never do such a thing! I embrace these injustices and economic differences over any foreign justice or equality. I am well content in my own country. I love it and everything inside it. I am sorry.”

The stranger left. A few days later Asim found his picture in the newspaper. The caption made him stagger. The man was a fraud. He lured money out of people by misleading them. He had ultimately got what he deserved.

Asim smiled upon reading it, “He couldn't have fooled me. Allah be praised...”

## 365 STORIES (PART-5)

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# Shame

In my childhood I was admitted to a first-rate school in the neighbourhood. I was outgoing and lost no time in befriending lots of children. However, I would talk to anyone during the lesson and due to my concentration and focus I could learn and remember all my lessons quickly. My mother used to listen to what I had learned during the day and would reward me with many dua's and goodies if I did well. When I didn't, I received a good scolding. My hard work and quick intelligence won me praise and encouragement from my teachers and my principal.

As the exams approached, my toil increased. Hamid, Yousuf and Shaukat were my friends and competitors. They were also clever and hardworking. We often went head to head in our studies but I always managed to beat them.

Finally the exams were upon us. The first paper was on the next day. I revised my lessons well and slept. I awoke before Fajr and again began to revise and after salah in the masjid revised once more. After breakfast I left for school.

As I was about to enter the classroom, I heard one of my teachers' voice.

“How have you prepared for the exams, my son?” said Sir Ubaid.

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“Sir, I was advised by one of my neighbours to pour my heart into studies especially during the exams, to respect my elders and serve them, and to pray Salah with congregation. I have faithfully done everything.”

Hearing my answer, he lovingly caressed my head and told me that half an hour remained before the exam and this time would be best spent in Salahtul Hajaat. He showed me how to perform the prayer and left. I did as he had instructed and after the Salah I sat praying hard for success in the exams, not only for myself but for the whole class. Then, reciting Durood, I went to the exam hall.

As I held the paper in my hands I realized that I knew all the answers. I began to solve the paper according to the instructions of my elders. This same routine was repeated for all the papers. I used to finish my papers about one hour before the time limit. My performance began to irk my friends, Hamid, Yousuf and Shaukat, and they complained to the principal that I was cheating. On the last day of the exams I had finished my exam and was standing outside the hall when I was called to the principal's office by a teacher. I was surprised but followed the teacher there. As I entered, I saw that a few pupils were already assembled. Hamid, Yousuf and Shaukat were among them. The principal said to the teacher,

“Frisk him.” As he came forward, a friend of mine stepped in between. He was small in stature and his name was Saleem. He spoke,

“Sir, I can say for sure that he has not cheated...he has no material hidden anywhere. He is the brightest student of our class and he has always helped me out. Such a person can never cheat!”

Upon hearing this, Shaukat chimed in. “How can you be so sure! We also give our exams. You know that it takes at least two or two and half

### 365 STORIES (PART-5)

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hours to complete the exams. Hamid, Yousuf and myself, we are no less intelligent than he is and we work twice as hard as he does. We have never managed to finish our papers in such a short time. There is no doubt that he cheats.”

Sir Ubaid had also come to the room. He sided with me saying, “I can guarantee that he can never do such a thing. I know him very well.”

“Well we can clear this up by searching him. Go on.” The principal was adamant. I was frisked and nothing was found. The accusers stared at each other in dismay. The Principal said, in a steely voice,

“How dare you accuse your fellow student of such a foul action? Now, what should I do with you?”

They bowed their heads and couldn't speak. I spoke, “Sir, please pardon them. They are good friends of mine and they must have been mistaken.”

Hamid, Yousuf and Shaukat turned red with embarrassment and shame.



## 365 STORIES (PART-5)

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### Wolf in Sheep's clothing

She was pacing up and down. Abdul Aziz also had a worried look on his face. It was 6 o'clock in the evening during winter time. "He has never been out so late! Where is he!!?"

"I don't know, mother. I have asked every single one of his friends. No one knows where he is." Abdul Aziz remarked.

"May God have mercy...Ghulam Rasul has never been out so long. O God, please protect my child."

Suddenly there was a knock on the door. Abdul Aziz ran to see who was outside. It was Ghulam Rasul. Silently, he entered the room.

"Where were you, my son?" his mother exclaimed.

"I...umm....I...was..." he stammered.

"I what? Where were you?" she frowned.

"I was actually with my friend, Liaqat." He blurted.

"I am not aware of any Liaqat among your friends. Who is he?" Abdul Aziz riposted.

"He is a new friend. I met him today."



### 365 STORIES (PART-5)

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“And today you disappeared from home...I am sure he not a good person,” concluded his mother. “What were you doing with him?” He fell silent.

She repeated her question angrily.

“Umm...I was playing football with him.”

“Football? At this time of night?” She was relentless. He fell silent again. Abdul Aziz glanced at his clothes and understood that he was lying. There was no speck of dirt or any other telltale sign.

With an air of distaste she left the room, unconvinced. Abdul Aziz followed.



“Listen, I was here first.” Atif proclaimed his right to the seat.

“But I always sit here!” Ghulam Rasul was stubborn.

“Sure you do. But we agreed that the one who got here first would sit here. I was here first today. You can sit somewhere else today.” Atif smiled.

“No, that is impossible. I won’t stand it!”

Abdul Aziz stood nearby, listening to the argument.

“Brother, Atif is right. He put his bag on the desk in the morning. That makes it his right.”

Ghulam Rasul glared at his brother, “Why are you siding with him? You are my brother, not his!”

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“That is right. But I am not wrong either. It is Atif’s turn today. You’d better let him sit here before the others start arriving. You can sit next to him: that seat is as close to the teacher and the whiteboard.”

“I will deal with you later,” Ghulam Rasul said crossly and moved aside. Atif looked gratefully at Abdul Aziz.



“Auntie! Look at what Ghulam Rasul has done!” Hearing Asif’s cries Abdul Aziz’s mother ran out. She was spellbound at the sight. Her neighbour’s son stood outside, his clothes splattered with blood and a bandage on his head.

“What happened?!?” she said with difficulty.

“Ghulam Rasul bashed me on the head!” he wailed.

“But why did he do such a thing?”

“We were playing together when suddenly he picked up a brick and threw it at me.”

“He lies! I did not throw it at him! I threw it at Akhlaq but he stepped aside.”

“What really happened, Abdul Aziz?”

“Mother, Ghulam Rasul has really hit Asif. They were both arguing about something and he threw the brick at Asif.” As he finished Asif’s mother stormed inside. She kept shouting for a while and then left, leaving Ghulam Result’s mother dazed, holding her head in her hands.



## 365 STORIES (PART-5)

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As the days passed Ghulam Rasul went from bad to worse. One day, as Abdul Aziz was entering the house he saw his mother speaking with Anwar, another neighbor of his.

“Son, why are you so agitated? Where is Ghulam Rasul? You went to get him, didn’t you?”

“Auntie, he...he...”

“What happened to him?” she could hardly restrain her anxiety.

“He has been arrested.”

“What?!? That can’t be! But why?”

“He and his friend, Liaqat, were caught stealing from a shop.” “The police were called and they took him away.”

At that Ghulam Result’s father entered the house. He became worried upon hearing what had happened and left after reassuring them that everything would be alright. He returned late at night accompanied by Ghulam Rasul whose face was dark with humiliation.



The next day Abdul Aziz decided to have a talk with his brother. He offered two raka'at Salah, prayed for his brother’s guidance, and walked to his brother’s room.

“Brother, I am very uneasy,” he said in a voice brimming with emotion. Ghulam Rasul looked at him in astonishment.

“Why are you uneasy?”

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### 365 STORIES (PART-5)

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“I think about what will happen if God throws you into the Fire...”  
Abdul Aziz said solemnly.

“Why would God put me into the fire?” Ghulam Rasul asked quietly.  
The events of yesterday had shaken him.

“The teacher of our madresa says that the people, who do not obey their parents, trouble them, misbehave with other people, and commit sins, are people who will be punished by God who will throw them into the fire. I fear that God will put you into the fire with them. You used to be a good person and do good works and everyone loved you. Now, bad company has put you on the wrong path. Now, you do not care about anyone. You even give pain to your parents, not heeding them at all. No one likes you anymore. I am younger than you are and yet you are not a beacon of inspiration for me. No...No, quite the opposite!”

Ghulam Rasul fell silent. Then he looked up and said in a somber voice, “What do you suggest I do?”

“O my brother, our teacher in the madersa says that we should seek forgiveness from Allah all the time. Our Prophet, peace be upon him, sought it seventy times a day. And Allah says in the Quran ‘O believers! Seek forgiveness from Allah, pure and true. Allah will hopefully remove you from your sins and enter you into paradise beneath which rivers flow.’ You should seek forgiveness from Allah, from the bottom of your heart.”

“My dearest brother, I will never again trouble my parents or anyone else. And I will break up with this so called friend who was misleading me...leave the path that leads to countless sins. May Allah give me strength!” Ghulam Rasul sobbed.

Standing across the door of the room his mother smiled.

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## 365 STORIES (PART-5)

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### Don't repeat that story!

Muzammil was in a bad state. He had been called to the police station again. His face was pale and drawn. This summons had become a monthly affair.

"Why did they call you?" asked his wife.

"Suspicion, that's all. I don't know when this torment will end." He held his face in his hands. "You didn't tell Zeeshan, did you?"

"No, he's asleep. Besides, I would never tell him."

Muzammil's thoughts turned to his childhood. He remembered the time when he had been summoned to the principal's office. There was a copy lying on the desk.

"Whose signature is this?" he asked Muzammil.

"Sir Amjad's," Muzammil replied.

"You are lying. He never signed this. Where did this signature come from, then? Answer me!" the principal roared.

"I signed it." His confession was as startling as it was unexpected. The signature was identical to the teacher's. There was not even a hair's breadth of difference. The reason why he was caught was that all the

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### 365 STORIES (PART-5)

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solutions were wrong. The teacher's signature on such work had raised the principal's suspicions when he checked the copies of the 7<sup>th</sup> grade. Muzammil's fear of the teacher had spurred him to practice the teacher's signature until he could reproduce the latter's signature. This offense led to his expulsion from school. In his second school he learnt all the teacher's signatures in a few days. His parents were called to school but nothing made any difference. He began to forge signatures on other pupil's copies as well as his own. He was caught and expelled again. There came a time when he was made to leave school and put into the employment of a general store. It was exactly what he wanted. After working there a couple of years he got work at a jeweler's store. His hard work earned him the confidence of the owner. One day the owner gave him a cheque which was for a large amount. On the way to the bank he gave way to temptation and had the cheque photocopied. He began to practice the signature in earnest. Then one day he got his opportunity.

That day his employer was sitting at the shop when he had a slight heart attack. Muzammil had access to the cheque book from where he quietly removed a cheque. He took his employer to the hospital where the doctors were able to put him out of danger. This incident made his owner trust him even more. Then Muzammil used the cheque to write a large sum of money to himself and put his employer's signature on it. As he approached the bank, his heart was pounding. As his token number was called out the cashier directed him to go to the manager's office. Oh no, he thought, I have been caught! He tried to run off but the cashier called for the security personnel to detain him.

His crime was discovered and though his employer pardoned him, the bank brought a lawsuit and he was sentenced to prison. Even after his

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prison term ended he continued to live under a cloud of suspicion. Whenever any crime was committed in the city which involved forgery he was summoned to the police station and forced to prove his innocence. He was compelled to leave his neighbourhood so that his newborn son would not come to know why he was called to the police station every few weeks.

His son grew up and one day when he was buying some cold drinks from a shop that had just opened in their neighbourhood, the shopkeeper asked him where to deliver the bottles.

“Write down my father’s name, uncle. It’s Muzammil.” Zeeshan was turning away when the shopkeeper asked the man standing nearby,

“Do you know Muzammil?”

“Very well. He is the one who is being called to the police station all the time. Let the child leave and I will tell you.”

Zeeshan’s mind was in a whirl. Why was his father called the police station so often? He put this question to his father when he came home. Zeeshan was shocked. He never expected his sins to follow him here. He made up an answer to satisfy his son’s curiosity. But he began to think that he would have to move yet again to protect his son from the knowledge of what his father really was. Before he could put his plan into action something unthinkable happened.

He had just come home when Zeeshan called to him.

“Papa! Come here. I want to show you something!”

“Is it anything important?”

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Zeeshan took out his Urdu copy. "Tell me which one is real and which one is not," Zeeshan pointed to two signatures.

"They are both your teacher's signatures. I have seen his signature and I can recognize it easily."

"No, no. One is an imitation and the other is real," Zeeshan said jubilantly.

Upon hearing these words Muzammil hit his son so hard that his son fell down. Upon hearing his son crying Zeeshan's mother came running.

"Why are you hitting him?" she cried.

"Do you want to know why I am called to the police station so often?" Muzammil asked his son. This unexpected question shocked Zeeshan into silence. Muzammil narrated his whole story and what that first forgery had led to. "Promise me you will never ever repeat this story."

Zeeshan got up and tipped the inkpot over the forged signature. This simple act assured Muzammil that his story would never be repeated again.





## 365 STORIES (PART-5)

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### That one word

“Mama...Mama.” The words struck my ears as I prepared food in the kitchen. Immediately I came out. In the corridor stood my one-year-old son, Bilal. Upon seeing me he again said, “Mama!”

I was overcome with joy. This was the first time he had called me ‘Mama.’ I was going mad with ecstasy. It was as if this simple word indicated the culmination of my motherhood. I lovingly embraced my son and showered him with kisses and caressed his hair. Even he realized that he had done something to make his mother feel so overjoyed.

“Once again, my dear, once more!” I couldn’t get enough.

Bilal remained silent. He stared at me with visible astonishment. As I repeated my appeal he hid his face in my lap. The more I tried the more I was disappointed. Bilal refused to speak. I picked him up and standing on the stairs called out to my neighbour Khadija.

“Listen, O Khadija, where are you?”

“What is it Rizwana? You seem very happy today!” she was washing clothes in her yard.

“So I should be, after what has happened today!”

“What is it? What is it?”

### 365 STORIES (PART-5)

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“Today Bilal called me Mama for the first time!”

“This is really a cause for celebration! You should hand out mithai on this occasion!”

“Sure I will!” I distributed mithai in the entire neighbourhood.

When Bilal’s father returned from work in the evening, he was surprised and delighted to hear the news. “Bilal! I would like to hear that too!” he said, but Bilal babbled something and did not comply with the request.

A week passed and despite my fervent efforts Bilal did not utter the word ‘Mama’. My ears longed for it and I desired to hear it again and again. My husband understood what I was going through.

“Rizwana! The time will come, indeed! When he learns it you will hear it all the time!”

“When will that time come? Oh, when?” I blurted out.

“Very soon,” he tried to soothe me.

“Oh I wish it would!”

One day Bilal was playing in the yard when he saw a rat. Scared he shrieked and turned to flee. Not seeing the motorbike standing nearby, he collided with it. The next moment he lay on the ground bleeding.

Hearing his shriek I dashed out with my husband. I took his head in my arms. It was bleeding, as was his mouth. We ran to the hospital. When he was discharged from the emergency ward, I confronted the attending physician.

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“Will he...be all right?”

“Don’t worry Madam, the injury to the head was but a scratch...However, his tongue received a cut due to being bit in the collision.”

“If his tongue has been injured how will he speak?” I was anxious.

“Well, it’s not deep; he’ll recover in a couple of weeks...no need to worry.”

“Now I will have to wait fifteen days to hear what I have heard just once!” I was downhearted. With tears in my eyes I returned home with Bilal and my husband. On my way home some harsh thoughts took hold of me. I remembered my stepmother; the same stepmother whom I had never accepted as my own.

I was ten years old when my mother left this world. My father, thinking of his children had married again. I loved my mother a great deal and that is why I had become hostile the minute that my stepmother stepped over the threshold. I didn’t like her one bit. Although she took great care of all of us brothers and sisters I didn’t let her make a place for herself in my heart. I grew more distant from her by the day. My younger siblings called her Mama but I could never bring myself to do so.

“Rizwana! Why is it that you stay so upset with me all the time? I am your mother! You should call me the same as how your brothers and sisters do! I am your mother!” she protested one day when was reading a book in my room.

“You are *not* my mother! I will *never* call you by that name!” I was indignant. She left quietly. After that she tried many times to make me see her point of view but I refused to budge. Not once would I call her

### 365 STORIES (PART-5)

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Mama or mother. After living fifteen years in her shadow, when I got married, she came to bid me farewell with tears flowing freely.

“Rizwana!” she said in a bitter tone, the first she adopted in our relationship, “You have not called me mother once in these fifteen years! Would that Allah make you realize the importance of this word...how precious this word is!”

Bilal’s crying interrupted the train of my thoughts. I hid my son in an embrace. Now on side there were fifteen years...on the other fifteen days. This wound to my motherhood made me realize how much pain I had caused my stepmother. It was her patience that she could nurture me at her side for fifteen years, and spend all this time hoping to hear one ‘Mama’ from my mouth. She made every effort to win my heart ...but I put up a wall between myself and every road that led to that word. How much I had made her suffer...I thought.

The next moment I had come to a decision. I picked up Bilal and holding him tightly said to my husband.

“I want to go to my parent’s place right now!”

“Why? What happened?” he was surprised.

“Today I have realized my mistake... I have to make amends for it straightaway, God Willing!”

“What are you saying?”

“I will tell you everything when we get there.”

When I reached my parents’ house I was crying. In a hurry my stepmother stepped forward to hold me. All this while, she showered many prayers on me and my son. When she asked me the reason for crying I told her everything.

### 365 STORIES (PART-5)

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“Today I will say with my tongue that word which I have not uttered for fifteen years!”

“Yes, yes, my dear, please do! It would mean the world to me!”

“Mother! My dearest Mother!” I cried and felt a heavy burden lift from my chest. I peered into my son’s eyes and felt as if he would address me with the same words. My husband quietly stood to a side. He now knew the reason for my return there.



## 365 STORIES (PART-5)

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# The Resolution

Both of the brothers were in a difficult situation. Each of them wanted to put this responsibility on the other. Each had a million reasons for evading their responsibility. Neither was willing for something that could last for a few months or worse.

“You keep her,” said Akmal to Ajmal.

“You have inherited the house. That is where Mother wants to stay. And besides, my four-year-old keeps her mother busy. There would be no one to take care of Mother. I would suggest that you put her up.” The younger Ajmal listed his excuses.

“Brother! My children are older...when Mother coughs they cannot sleep at night...they have to go to school in the morning. Then Mother keeps scolding them like the elderly are wont to do. They have matured and they feel it.” Ajmal also had his reasons.

Sixty year old Fatima had given her boys the love of a father as well as that of a mother. Rasheed Sahib had died in an accident when they were young. She had cooked and cleaned for other people but had raised them proudly. She had spent generously on their education and now both had good jobs. Their inheritance had been distributed and Akmal had received their father's house. The other one which they had built using their joint business was assigned to Ajmal.

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Now Fatima was dependent on both of them for her needs. She had heard their conversation but, in her feeble state, could muster nothing more than a deep sigh.

Ajmal had by now been convinced, though half-heartedly. He told Akmal that he would be there in the evening to pick her up. She should be prepared by then. Akmal and his wife packed her clothes and other belongings.

“Son! Do set aside my trunk. Don’t forget to put it out, please.”

“What’s in the trunk, Mother?” Akmal asked.

“Son, it’s nothing important.”

“There must be something...I see it has a lock!” his curiosity was roused.

He went to the room where it was kept. Maybe there is some old jewellery inside which she doesn’t want to talk about, he thought.

“Maybe I should keep Mother with me, or she will give it to Ajmal,” his mind began to stray, “Perhaps I should look inside.” He broke the lock.

“Oh...old books!” he made a face. He began to feel around the trunk. Picking up an old diary, he began to turn the pages. His eyes settled on a page. The date written was 8<sup>th</sup> March, 1975. It was written,

Today Akmal is nine months old. When his tongue first uttered ‘lummy’ (mummy) I felt as if all the happiness of the world was mine. I told mother, father and my brothers and sisters all about it...

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He turned the page.

Today my Akmal was sleeping when a great big mosquito came into the room. He began to settle repeatedly on his little face... Rasheed and I woke up in anxiety. We tried to kill the mosquito but it flew here and there. At two in the morning, in a very cold night, we tried our best but we couldn't get at it. Rasheed sterilized the room while I took Akmal to the next room to protect him from the fumes. After an hour, when no mosquito was left, I returned him - fast asleep - to his bed. Only then could I sleep.

He turned a few more pages.

Today Akmal is three years old. Today is his first day of school. I stayed with my eyes glued to the door and when his van dropped him I was there at the door to welcome him home. I was extremely happy today: my son had taken his first step in his education.

He turned another page.

I heard Akmal's scream...I ran from the kitchen towards him... He had spilt the steaming cup of tea over himself...I quickly changed his clothes and applied ointment to his hand which had received burns and when he was at peace I was satisfied... A while later I felt a burning on my wrist...I discovered that my own wrist had been injured by some hot object when I was tending to Akmal...and I didn't even realize it.

Akmal kept reading the diary and tears flowed down his face. To think of it...how mean were he and his brother and how noble was this woman, their mother. He felt the earth slide from under his feet. He turned another page.



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Today it's been an year since Rasheed died in the accident...I have to alone bear the burden of bringing up Akmal and Ajmal...to give them a mother's and a father's love.



Today Akmal achieved third place in his school exams, may Allah decree command that he comes first next time. I pray to Allah that he comes first in every exam of this life or the next...

Akmal, reading the diary, began to sob. To think that this day he was not willing to serve such a selfless and devoted mother...

Today is Eid-ul-Fit and both my sons are pleading for new clothes. I didn't have the money...but after working in a few homes I collected enough to buy them their clothes...I could make do with old ones myself... Seeing them wearing their new clothes gave me intense pleasure... I really don't care for new clothes but I do care that Rasheed is not here with me any more... that's why I write this diary daily...to lessen my pain...I have high expectations from my sons...they are my support and I only live for them... May Allah keep them in His protection ...  
Ameen

Akmal had come to a decision. When the bell rang in the evening, he went to see who it was. It was Ajmal who came in and without losing any time told their mother to come with him.

"No! Mother will stay with me!" Akmal was resolute. Fatima stared at him in surprise. He ran towards her and, throwing himself at her feet, began to cry.

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“Why are you saying this, my son? I thought I was a burden to you.” Ajmal stood stone-still. Akmal handed the diary to him. As he read it he began to weep. He too realized what a monster he had been.

“I will keep her!” Ajmal erupted.

“No, I will!” Akmal said obstinately. “Mother, why did you hide this diary from us?” he asked in a voice full of emotion.

“Son! A mother’s love is selfless. None of this world’s riches can repay this love! Why should I tell you how I have taught and raised you? The diary wasn’t of any importance for me to have told you.”

“Mother, this diary is a unique treasure for us...it is the lamp which has guided us to the right path.”

The matter had turned on its head. Their eyes were now opened. Neither of them wanted to back off. Both now insisted on keeping her with them.

“Let Dadi Jan decide!” said tiny Aisha, smiling.

“Yes, that’s it! My granddaughter is right!”

Both of her sons agreed. Fatima then gave her decision.

“My sons! Both of you are beloved to me. I don’t want to be away from either of you! I have decided that I will stay for fifteen days with Akmal and fifteen days with Ajmal. Is that fine?” Her sons nodded in agreement and rested their heads on her shoulder, feeling a great peace deep inside their hearts.



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# Short Stories 6

## Cycle of Evil

There was once a king who was so cruel and unjust that his subjects yearned for his death or ouster.

However, one day, he surprised them all by announcing that he had decided to turn over a new leaf.

“No more cruelty, no more injustice,” he promised them, and he was as good as his word. He became known as the ‘Gentle Monarch’.

Months after his transformation, one of his ministers plucked up enough courage to ask him what had brought about his change of heart. The king answered:

“As I was galloping through my forests I caught sight of a fox being chased by a hound. The fox escaped into his hole but not before the hound has bitten into its leg and maimed it. Later, I rode into a village and saw the same hound there. It was barking at a man. Even as I watched, the man picked up a huge stone and flung it at the dog, breaking its leg. The man had not gone far when he was kicked by a horse. His knee was shattered and he fell to the ground, disabled for life. The horse began to run but it fell into a hole and broke its leg. Reflecting on all that had transpired I thought to myself, ‘Evil begets evil. If I

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continue in my evil ways, I will surely be overtaken by evil'. So I decided to turn over a new leaf."

The minister went away convinced that the time was ripe to overthrow the king and seize the throne. Immersed in thought, he did not see the steps in front of him and fell, breaking his neck.

### No Good Deed Is Small

He was drunk, and had a bottle of wine in each hand, so drunk that he could not even walk properly and was swaying from left to right. As he passed through the streets, it was already time for Fajr and the call of Azaan could be heard from all sides.

As he passed through a narrow lane, his eyes caught hold of what he could not bear to see. Surely he was intoxicated but deep inside his heart the light of Islam burned covered by the mantle of sins. But now that this flame was aroused he could not pass away from the muddy lane after watching a piece of paper on which some Quranic ayaat were written. It is an obligation for all Muslims to respect the Quran as it is the word of Allah Ta'ala.

He thought for a while about what to do. Although he was drunk it seemed that something inside was shaken up. He dared not lift the paper with his hands because they had been carrying wine, which is forbidden in Islam. He thought and thought, and then picked the paper right out of the mud with his mouth. He cleaned the paper, applied Ittar to it and then put it on a high place.

Allah Ta'ala appreciated this incident so much that He raised the man's status from a drunkard and made him a renowned scholar of Islam.

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Do you know the name of this great scholar? His name was Bashr Bin Haafi.

### **Don't change the world**

Once upon a time, there was a king who ruled a prosperous country. One day, he went for a trip to some distant areas of his country. When he came back to his palace, he complained that his feet were giving him a lot of pain, because it was the first time that he went for such a long trip, and the road that he went over was very rough and stony. He then ordered his people to cover every road of the entire country with leather.

This would need thousands of cows' skins, and would cost a huge amount of money. Then one of his wise servants dared to suggest to the king, "Why do you have to spend that unnecessary amount of money? Why don't you just cut a little piece of leather to cover your feet?"

The king was surprised and he agreed to his suggestion: to make a "shoe" for himself.

### **The Travellers and the Plane Tree**

Two men were walking along the road one summer day. Soon it became too hot to go any further and, seeing a large plane tree nearby, they threw themselves on the ground underneath to rest in its shade.

Gazing up into the branches one man said to the other, "What a useless tree this is. It does not have fruit or nuts that we can eat and we cannot even use its wood for anything."

"Don't be so ungrateful," rustled the tree in reply. "It is I who shield you from the burning rays of the hot sun, this very moment. And you dare to call me a good-for-nothing!"

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### Learn From Your Mistakes

Thomas Edison tried two thousand different materials in search of a filament for the light bulb. When none worked satisfactorily, his assistant complained,

“All our work is in vain. We have learned nothing.”

Edison replied very confidently, “Oh, we have come a long way and we have learned a lot. We now know that there are two thousand elements which we cannot use to make a good light bulb.”

### Rich People

One day, a father of a very wealthy family took his son on a trip to the country with the purpose of showing his son how the poor people lived so he could be thankful for his wealth.

They spent a couple of days and nights on the farm of what would be considered a very poor family.

On their return from their trip, the father asked his son, “How was the trip?”

“It was great, Dad.”

“Did you see how poor people can be?” the father asked.

“Oh yeah” said the son.

“So what did you learn from the trip?” asked the father.

The son answered, “I saw that we have one dog and they have four. We have a pool that reaches to the middle of our garden and they have a

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creek that has no end. We have imported lanterns in our garden and they have the stars at night. Our patio reaches to the front yard and they have the whole horizon. We have a small piece of land to live on and they have fields that go beyond our sight. We have servants who serve us, but they serve others. We buy our food, but they grow theirs. We have walls around our property to protect us; they have friends to protect them.” With this the boy’s father was speechless. Then his son added, “Thanks, Dad, for showing me how poor we are.”



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### A Good Friend

My name is SaifurRahman but I am known as 'Saif'. I prefer 'Saif' also because my best friend Hassaan calls me by that name. I like Hassaan a lot. This is because he is very likeable, healthy and very intelligent.

I first met him at school and we immediately became best friends. After school I came home on his bicycle. It seemed new and shiny. My bicycle was covered up with dirt and its shiny ribbon has scratched off in many places. I felt embarrassment and asked him,

“Is this new?”

“No, it belongs to my elder brother. He got a new one so I got his,” he smiled.

“Really?” I said and left for home.

“Wait up!” Hassan shouted, “Your home is on the same way as mine. We should go together.” I nodded carelessly.

We began to talk. I told him about how I spent my day. Then he started talking. As I turned my head towards him I caught a glimpse of his teeth. They sparkled like pearls in the sunlight. Self-consciously I licked my own teeth and felt that they were covered by layers. At the same time I became aware of a foul smell proceeding from them. I felt ashamed.



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As I reached my place I stepped forward. He called out my name and as I turned around he stepped forward to shake my hand and said, "Allah Hafiz!"

I said, "Allah Hafiz" but as I glanced at his hands I saw that they were clean and free of dirt, with the nails clipped. I swiftly shook his hand and entered my home.

I inspect my hands closely. They nails were large and full of dirt. The hands were covered in mud and dirt and traces of yellow ice-cream. I ran to the toilet. When I looked in the mirror a strange spectacle greeted me. I saw sunken eyes below dirty eyelashes and lips coloured orange by ice-cream. The ice-cream had left its marks on the chin and the sleeves. Suddenly Hassaan's face appeared in the mirror. Large bright eyes, rosy cheeks and teeth like pearls. A tear dropped from the corner of my eye. I opened the tap and washed my face and hands vigorously with soap. Then I brushed my teeth. The effects were soothing. Somewhat comforted I left. After dinner I again brushed my teeth forcefully. The layers of dirt seemed lessened. I slept peacefully. In the evening I awoke to the sounds of my father entering the house. He had brought with him fresh fruit. I was pleased and having ate a few fruits kept some in my bicycle carrier and pedaled off to Hassaan's place. Today I didn't want to play. When I reached there I saw that he was playing with his little sister out in the front. I never played with my little sister, Sarah. How is he doing it? I wondered. I was going to say Salaam in a loud voice when he caught sight of me and stepped forward.

"Assalamu alakium!"

"Walaikum assalam," I replied, smiling, and got off.

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“Welcome,” he said, “I am surprised to see you, Saif!”

“I wasn’t in the mood for playing today so I decided to come here. I have brought some fruit for you.” At first he refused but took it when I insisted. I gave an apple to him and picked up one for myself. As I was about to chomp on it he stopped me.

“Wait, wait...you must wash it first. Maria, come here. Take these fruit inside, wash it and bring a plate and a knife too.”

I was again embarrassed and began to regret why I had come. He took my bicycle from me and leant it against the wall. We sat down on the spick-and-span floor. I spotted a medium-sized box hanging on the wall to a side. The words ‘USE ME’ were written beautifully on it. I asked him, “Who has made that?” He said that he and his brother had helped his mother make it. I received a shock. I never helped my mother with anything.

His sister came with the plate and knife and the apples, all washed, with a few bananas which her mother had put there. I popped the banana into my mouth and threw the peel into the air. Hassaan picked it up and put it in the litterbin. I asked him in an anxious voice,

“What is it that you eat?”

“Huh? Whatever you do!” he was surprised.

“No, No, tell me please!”

“Well, I eat meat, vegetables, rice, daal, bread and fruits.”

“I eat the same things.” I was disappointed.

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“Everyone eats the same things. Why were you asking?” he was puzzled.

“Well, forget it. Allah Hafiz” I left him staring after me.

When I reached home I was taken aback. How different was the scene before me! Apple seeds, banana peels, torn pages and other miscellaneous rubbish decorated the threshold. I hurried inside, took a broom, came out and swept the place. Then I took my bicycle inside and leaning it against the wall began to hose it down. That moment my father came out and exclaimed in surprise,

“Saif, What are you doing?!”

“Just washing my bicycle, father.” He commended me. A little while later when he stepped out he had a brush and soap in his hands. He worked up a lather and scrubbed the handlebar. It emerged as shiny as new. He handed me the brush and went out. As he went out he exclaimed.

“What’s this? Who has cleaned the porch?”

“I have, father!” I said loudly.

“Masha Allah! Good job!” he was pleased. As he left, my little sister, Sarah, entered holding the skipping rope with which she had been playing.

“May I hold this for you?” she asked innocently.

I was about to scold her when a picture of Hassaan popped into my mind who was animatedly talking with his little sister. I smiled and

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handed the hose over to Sarah. After a little time, the bicycle stood there shiny and clean. Looking at it, I was overjoyed. My mother peered into the room and told me to shower and change my clothes. Before I could ignore her, the image of Hassaan again intruded, with shining face and spotless clothes. I ran and jumped into the shower. When I emerged I was feeling very light and as I looked myself in the mirror I was pleased.

I began to change overnight. Everyone noticed this change. But one thing kept annoying me. Why wasn't I as healthy as Hassaan? He ate what I ate and still...? Today I stuffed my pockets put of candy and when going to school I offered one to Hassan, he said, "I don't eat such things. They make your teeth rot and give you bad breath." I kept the chewing gum back into my pocket. In the break, I took Hassan to where the ice-cream man stood behind the wall. I asked for two ice-creams and offered one to Hassaan. He refused saying,

"No, I can't eat this. It spoils your stomach and makes you sick." My mystery was solved. I returned the ice-creams and wiping my hands clean with a handkerchief, came back to class holding my friend's hand.



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# The Helpful Needles

Have you had smallpox? Polio? Typhoid? Probably not. However, such infectious diseases used to plague humankind. The word *plague* comes from one of these killer diseases—the bubonic plague. Throughout the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the plague killed nearly half of the population of Europe.

Small pox killed over 100,000 people a year for a century and left millions horribly scarred and disfigured. The influenza epidemic of 1918 killed 25 million worldwide. Polio killed thousands in the early twentieth century and left millions paralyzed.

One simple discovery not only stopped the spread of each of these diseases, it virtually eradicated them. That discovery was vaccinations. Vaccinations have saved millions of lives and have prevented unimaginable amounts of misery and suffering. American children are now regularly vaccinated for as many as 15 diseases.

Twenty-four-year-old Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, a well-known English poet, travelled to Turkey with her husband in 1712 when he became the British ambassador. Lady Mary noticed that native populations in Turkey didn't suffer from small pox, the dread disease that had left her scarred and pock marked and that killed tens of thousands in England each year.

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She soon learned that elderly tribal women performed what was called “ingrafting.” Previous British travellers had dismissed the practice as a meaningless tribal ritual. Lady Mary suspected that this annual event held the secret to their immunity from smallpox.

Village families would decide if anyone in the family should have small pox that year.

An old woman arrived carrying a nutshell full of infected liquid. She would open one of the volunteer’s veins with a needle dipped in the liquid, as the family sang and chanted. The infected person stayed in bed for two to three days with a mild fever and a slight rash. He or she was then as well as before, never getting a serious case of small pox. Mary wondered if English populations could be protected by ingrafting.

Upon her return to England in 1713, Lady Mary lectured about the potential of ingrafting. She was dismissed as an untrained and “silly” woman. In early 1714 Caroline, Princess of Wales heard one of Lady Mary’s talks and approved Lady Mary’s ingrafting of convicts and orphans.

Lady Mary collected the puss from small pox blisters of sick patients and injected small amounts of the deadly liquid into her test subjects. The death rate of those she inoculated was less than one-third that of the general public, and five times as many of her subjects got mild, non-scarring cases.

However, there was a problem with ingrafting. Inoculations with live smallpox viruses were dangerous. Some patients died from the injections that were supposed to protect them.

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Enter Edward Jenner, a young English surgeon, in 1794. Living in a rural community, Jenner noticed that milkmaids almost never got smallpox. However, virtually all milkmaids *did* get cowpox, a disease that caused mild blistering on their hands. Jenner theorized that cowpox must be in the same family as small pox and that getting mild cow pox was like ingrafting and made a per son immune to the deadly smallpox.

He tested his theory by injecting 20 children with liquid taken from the blisters of a milkmaid with cowpox. Each infected child got cowpox. Painful blisters formed on their hands and arms, lasting several days.

Two months later, Jenner injected live smallpox into each of his test children. If Jenner's theory was wrong, many of these children would die. However, none of his test children showed any sign of smallpox.

Jenner invented the word "*vaccination*" to describe his process when he announced his results in 1798. *Vacca* is the Latin word for cow; *vaccinia* is Latin for cowpox. In this way the Turkish Muslims helped the world develop vaccines against many diseases.



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### Short Stories-7

#### The Three Wise Men

One day some wise men, who were going about the country trying to find answers to some of the great questions of their time, came to Nasreddin's district and asked to see the wisest man in the place. Nasreddin was brought forward, and a big crowd gathered to listen.

The first wise man began by asking, "Where is the exact centre of the world?"

"It is under my right heel," answered Nasreddin.

"How can you prove that?" asked the first wise man.

"If you don't believe me," answered Nasreddin, "measure and see."

The first wise man had nothing to answer to that, so the second wise man asked his question.

"How many stars are there in the sky?" he said.

"As many as there are hairs on my donkey," answered Nasreddin.

"What proof have you got of that?" asked the second wise man.

"If you don't believe me," answered Nasreddin, "count the hairs on my donkey and you will see."



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“That’s foolish talk,” said the other. “How can one count the hairs on a donkey?”

“Well,” answered Nasreddin, “How can one count the stars in the sky? If one is foolish talk, so is the other.” The second wise man was silent.

The third wise man was becoming annoyed with Nasreddin and his answers, so he said, “You seem to know a lot about your donkey, so can you tell me how many hairs there are in its tail?”

“Yes,” answered Nasreddin. “There are exactly as many hairs in its tail as there are in your beard.”

“How can you prove that?” said the other.

“I can prove it very easily,” answered Nasreddin. “You can pull one hair out of my donkey’s tail for every one I pull out of your beard. If the hairs on my donkey’s tail do not come to an end at exactly the same time as the hairs in your beard, I will admit that I was wrong.”

Of course, the third wise man was not willing to do this, so the crowd declared Nasreddin the winner of the day’s arguments.

## Lion, Rats, Snake and the Honeycomb

Once a man saw in his dream that a lion was chasing him; the man ran to a tree, climbed onto it and sat on a branch. He looked down and saw that the lion was still there waiting for him. The man then looked to his side where the branch he was sitting on was attached to the tree and saw that two rats were circling around and eating the branch. One rat was black and the other one was white. The branch would fall on the ground very soon.

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The man then looked below again with fear and discovered that a big black snake had come & settled directly under him. The snake opened its mouth right under the man so that he will fall into it.

The man then looked up to see if there was anything that he could hold on to.

He saw another branch with a honeycomb. Drops of honey were falling from it. The man wanted to taste one of the drops. So, he put his tongue out and tasted one of the falling drops of honey. The honey was amazing in taste. So, he wanted to taste another drop. As he did, he got lost in the honey's sweetness. Meanwhile, he forgot about the two rats eating his branch away, the lion on the ground and the snake that is sitting right under him. After a while, he woke up from his sleep.

To get the meaning behind this dream, the man went to a pious scholar of Islam. The scholar said that the lion you saw was your death. It always chases you and goes wherever you go. The two rats, one black and one white, are the night and the day. The black one is the night and the white one is the day. They circle around, coming one after another, to eat your time as they take you closer to death. The big black snake with a dark mouth is your grave. It's there, just waiting for you to fall into it. The honeycomb is this world and the sweet honey is the luxuries of this world. We like to taste a drop of the luxuries of this world but it's very sweet. Then we taste another drop and yet another until we forget all about Death and the grave waiting on us.

## The Beautiful Heart

One day a young man was standing in the middle of the town proclaiming that he had the most beautiful heart in the whole valley.

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A large crowd gathered and they all admired his heart for it was perfect. There was not a mark or a flaw in it. Yes, they all agreed, it truly was the most beautiful heart they had ever seen.

The young man was very proud and boasted more loudly about his beautiful heart.

Suddenly, an old man appeared at the front of the crowd and said, "Why your heart is not nearly as beautiful as mine."

The crowd and the young man looked at the old man's heart. It was beating strongly ... but full of scars. It had places where pieces had been removed and other pieces put in ... but they didn't fit quite right and there were several jagged edges.

In fact, in some places there were deep gouges where whole pieces were missing. The people stared ... how could he say his heart is more beautiful, they thought?

The young man looked at the old man's heart and saw its state and laughed.

"You must be joking," he said. "Compare your heart with mine ... mine is perfect and yours is a mess of scars and tears."

"Yes," said the old man, "Yours is perfect looking ... but I would never trade with you. You see, every scar represents a person to whom I have given my love..... I tear out a piece of my heart and give it to them ... and often they give me a piece of their heart which fits into the empty place in my heart ... but because the pieces aren't exact, I have some rough edges, which I cherish, because they remind me of the love we shared."

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Sometimes I have given pieces of my heart away ... and the other person hasn't returned a piece of his heart to me. These are the empty gouges ... giving love is taking a chance. Although these gouges are painful, they stay open, reminding me of the love I have for these people too ... and I hope someday they may return and fill the space I have waiting. So now do you see what true beauty is?"

The young man stood silently with tears running down his cheeks. He walked up to the old man, reached into his perfect young and beautiful heart, and ripped a piece out. He offered it to the old man with trembling hands.

The old man took his offering, placed it in his heart and then took a piece from his old scarred heart and placed it in the wound in the young man's heart. It fit .... but not perfectly, as there were some jagged edges.

The young man looked at his heart, not perfect anymore but more beautiful than ever, since love from the old man's heart flowed into his. They embraced and walked away side by side.

## When the Winds Blow

Years ago a farmer owned land along the Atlantic seacoast. He constantly advertised for hired hands. Most people were reluctant to work on farms along the Atlantic. They dreaded the awful storms that raged across the ocean, wreaking havoc on the buildings and crops. As the farmer interviewed applicants for the job, he received a steady stream of refusals.

Finally, a short, thin man, well past middle age, approached the farmer. "Are you a good farmhand?" the farmer asked him: "Well, I can sleep when the wind blows," answered the man.

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Although puzzled by this answer, the farmer, desperate for help, hired him. The little man worked well around the farm, busy from dawn to dusk, and the farmer felt satisfied with the man's work.

Then one night the wind howled loudly in from offshore. Jumping out of bed, the farmer grabbed a lantern and rushed next door to the hired hand's sleeping quarters. He shook the little man and yelled, "Get up! A storm is coming! Tie things down before they blow away!"

The little man rolled over in bed and said firmly, "No sir. I told you, I can sleep when the wind blows."

Enraged by the response, the farmer was tempted to fire him on the spot. Instead, he hurried outside to prepare for the storm. To his amazement, he discovered that all of the haystacks had been covered with tarpaulins. The cows were in the barn, the chickens were in the coops, and the doors were barred. The shutters were tightly secured. Everything was tied down. Nothing could blow away.

The farmer then understood what his hired hand meant, so he returned to his bed to also sleep while the wind blew.

## The Illusion of Reflection

Once there was a king who had presented his daughter, the princess, with a beautiful diamond necklace. The necklace was stolen and his people in the kingdom searched everywhere but could not find it. Some said a bird might have stolen it. The king then asked them all to search for it and put a reward for \$50,000 for anyone who found it.

One day a clerk was walking home along a river next to an industrial area. This river was completely polluted, filthy and smelly. As he was walking, the clerk saw a shimmering in the river and when he looked, he saw the diamond necklace. He decided to try and catch it so that he

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could get the \$50,000 reward. He put his hand in the filthy, dirty river and grabbed at the necklace, but somehow missed it and couldn't catch it. He took his hand out and looked again and the necklace was still there. He tried again, this time he walked in the river and dirtied his pants in the filthy river and put his whole arm in to catch the necklace. But strangely, he still missed the necklace!

He came out and started walking away, feeling depressed.

Then again he saw the necklace, right there. This time he was determined to get it, no matter what. He decided to plunge into the river, although it was a disgusting thing to do as the river was polluted, and his whole body would become filthy. He plunged in, and searched everywhere for the necklace and yet he failed. This time he was really bewildered and came out feeling very depressed that he could not get the necklace that would get him \$50,000.

Just then a saint who was walking by, saw him, and asked him what the matter was. The clerk didn't want to share the secret with the saint, thinking the saint might take the necklace for himself, so he refused to tell the saint anything. But the saint could see this man was troubled and being compassionate, again asked the clerk to tell him the problem and promised that he would not tell anyone about it. The clerk mustered some courage and decided to put some faith in the saint. He told the saint about the necklace and how he tried and tried to catch it, but kept failing. The saint then told him that perhaps he should try looking upward, toward the branches of the tree, instead of in the filthy river. The clerk looked up and sure enough, the necklace was dangling on the branch of a tree. He had been trying to capture a mere reflection of the real necklace all this time.

## 365 STORIES (PART-5)

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### Office Boy

A jobless man applied for the position of “office boy” at a very big firm.

The HR manager interviewed him and then gave a test: clean the floor. “You are hired!” he said, “Give me your email address, and I’ll send you the application to fill, as well as when you will start.”

The man replied “I have neither a computer, nor an email address.”

“I’m sorry,” said the HR manager, “If you don’t have an email that means you do not exist. And the one, who doesn’t exist, cannot have the job.” The man left with no hope at all. He didn’t know what to do, and had only \$10 in his pocket.

He then decided to go to the supermarket and buy a 10 kilogram tomato crate. He then sold the tomatoes in a door to door round. In less than two hours, he succeeded in doubling his capital. He repeated the operation 3 times, and returned home with \$60. The man realized that he could survive in this way, and started to go earlier every day, and return late. Thus, his money doubled or tripled every day. Shortly later, he bought a cart, then a truck, and then he had his own fleet of delivery vehicles.

Five years later, the man became one of the biggest food retailers in the US. He started to plan his family’s future, and decided to have some security plan.

He called a security company, and chose a protection plan. When the conversation was concluded, the company representative asked him his email. The man replied: “I don’t have an email.” The broker replied curiously, “You don’t have an email, and yet have succeeded to build an empire. Do you imagine what you could have been if you had an email?”

The man thought for a while, and replied, “An office boy!”

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# Let's Celebrate a Happy New Year

“Hey Abdullah! What's up dude? How are you gonna celebrate the New Year Eve?” asked Jaffar and his friends.

“A happy new year to all of you. Not once, not twice, but many times over! Yes! The Gregorian year, the Chinese New Year, Zoroastrian New Year, Egyptian New Year, Hindu New Year, Jewish New Year and many more,” replied Abdullah.

“Here you go again. Can't you ever stop lecturing! Anyway, we're bunking the classes on 1st Jan, you know we'll need to sleep. We're sure you'll give us the notes. Even if you don't we'll choke them off you!” threatened Moin.

“Well, in that case, not just New Year but also a happy independence day, a happy Diwali, a happy this day and a happy that day. We all love holidays, one thing or the other to get away from work and the usual hectic schedule. Out of the 365 days a year, a Pakistani kid has maximum 150 days for studies. That is just great! Only 150 days to go to school,” replied Abdullah calmly.

Jaffar and company were dumbfounded. Abdullah continued, “No, it is even better than that. We get the strike calls, someone's death, someone's birth, someone's wedding. Even Mother Nature seems to be sympathising with us; we have bad weather, we have summer holidays, we have winter holidays, and our own indigenous spring festival!”



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The three bullies were ashamed and thought it better to leave Abdullah alone.

Moin, Jaffar and Khalid came to Abdullah later in the day when he was walking home. They were really interested and concerned. They said, "We're sorry about what we said in the morning. Can you tell us some more things?"

Abdullah said, "Sure, no problem. I can understand. I'll just throw out a few things to you. Just think about them when you're alone. New Year comes in the beginning of every New Year. It brings loads of new resolutions, new joys, new happiness (add a 'happy' to the New Year), new friends and new dimensions to life. This also means it brings new challenges and new aspects to old challenges: more kids dying because of malnutrition, more kids every year that cannot go to school, more people without a shelter let alone a home, hungrier people, more fights, more wars, more depression, more injustices. More and more and more."

He continued, "But if we look at it from a different aspect, we have other 'mores': more New Year night parties, more fun and frolic, more food going to waste, more expensive clothes, more pocket money, more new model cars, more big bungalows, more air-conditioned shopping plazas. More and more and more."

Abdullah said, "Muslims are not encouraged to celebrate 1st Muharram in this manner."

Ask some question to yourself. Think them over when you are alone at night. These few questions are divided into two categories. Please try to do some soul-searching.

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What is the annual growth rate of developing countries like Pakistan? What do the economic indicators tell us about such countries? What is the average yearly profit of multinational companies? How much money is spent on fast food in Europe or U.S.A? What were the flower sales last year on Valentine's Day?

How many people lose their lives for lack of medical attention each year? How many people die due to bad working conditions? How many women are tortured to death each year? How many kids die because of hunger each year? How many people are living below poverty line?

We should thank Allah Ta'ala that we can afford to buy this book. We should thank Him also because we are able to see it, and can read it.

On a lighter note, we can see the ways to celebrate New Year's Eve. Well, we can play loud music to disturb our neighbours, we can remove the mufflers from bike silencers to create a racket at midnight, we can dance and dine all night long, and we can fire gunshots in the wee hours of the morning: we can go on and on, breaking all the rules and forgetting all the limits. Or we can spend the New Year's Eve without bread to eat, without electricity, without water to drink, and without a place to sleep.

But we should not be so negative in our thinking. Life is too short to be troubled by such petty things. The rich and well-fed or the poor and hungry, we will all die. Let the rich live richly, and let the poor live poorly. After all are we not just biochemical compounds having no purpose? Isn't human existence merely a coincidence and we have no one to answer to when we die?

The current New Year celebration has its own contentious history. In the Medieval era, most of Christian Europe regarded 25th March, the

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Feast of the Annunciation, as the beginning of the New Year, but it was observed on 25th December in England. William the Conqueror announced the New Year to be on 1st January, but England later settled on 25th March. In 1582, the Roman Catholic Church adopted the Gregorian calendar restoring 1st January as New Year's Day. Most of the countries followed suit later on.

It must be noted that the lunar and solar calendars have their respective uses and are very beneficial. But just because it has a use it is not fitting to start celebrating it. Specific days should not be set aside for celebrations and for having good meals. Having a good meal is not against ethics. The issue is that when having a good meal we should not only remember the deprived folk, we should do something to help them out.

So we have been through an alternative view of New Year celebration and a bit of its history. We have also engaged in some thought and asked a few questions. These questions can be answered, but require deep thought.

We need to justify our approach to these problems.

It is hoped that you understand now what Abdullah meant when he said, "Muslims are not encouraged to celebrate 1st Muharram in this manner."



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## 365 STORIES (PART-5)

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### An Excellent Wish

Fear of death was unknown to the Sahabah. They were therefore the most fearless and valiant of people. A person who can look death in the face can meet all situations calmly. There is for him no attraction in the wealth of this world, and no fear of any enemy.

On the eve of Uhud, Abdullah-bin-Jahsh رضي الله عنه said to Saad-bin-Abiwaqas رضي الله عنه

“O, Saad! Come, let us pray together. Let each pray to Allah for the grant of his sole desire, and the other would say Aameen to it. This way the prayers are more likely to be answered by Allah.”

Saad رضي الله عنه was first to pray, saying, “O, Allah, when the battles rage tomorrow, let me trace a very strong and fierce enemy. Let him attack me with might and main, and let me repulse him with all my strength. Then O, Allah let me be the triumphant by killing him for your sake, and allow me to have his possessions as booty.”

Abdullah said, “Aameen.” Then he prayed, “O Allah let me face one of the toughest fighters among the enemy tomorrow. Let him attack me with full fury and let me attack him with full strength. Then let him have the upper hand and kill me. May he cut my nose and ears from my body. And when I appear before You on the day of judgment, may You ask me, ‘How did you lose your nose and ears, O Abdullah?’ to which may I reply,

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‘These were lost in the way of Allah and his Prophet ﷺ.’ Then may You say, ‘Yes! Surely these were lost in My way.’ ”

Saad رضي الله عنه said, “Aameen.”

In the battle field next day, both of the Sahabah saw their prayers answered exactly as they had asked for. Saad رضي الله عنه says, “Abdullah’s prayer was better than mine. In the evening I noticed his ears and nose strung in a thread.”

This story, on the one hand, depicts great gallantry and valour on the part of the Sahabah, in as much as they were anxious to face the brave and the strong among the enemy, and on the other hand it shows their devotion and love for Allah. Abdullah رضي الله عنه wishes for Allah to confirm, on the Day of Judgment, that his sacrifice was really for His cause. What an excellent wish!



## 365 STORIES (PART-5)

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# Don't Judge A Book by Its Cover

A lady in a faded gingham dress and her husband, dressed in a homespun threadbare suit, stepped off the train in Boston and walk timidly without an appointment into the Harvard University President's outer office.

The secretary could tell in a moment that such backwoods, country hicks had no business at Harvard and probably didn't even deserve to be in Cambridge.

"We want to see the president," the man said softly.

"He'll be busy all day," the secretary snapped.

"We'll wait," the lady replied.

For hours the secretary ignored them, hoping that the couple would finally become discouraged and go away. They didn't and the secretary grew frustrated and finally decided to disturb the president, even though it was a chore she always regretted.

"Maybe if you see them for a few minutes, they'll leave," she said to him.

He sighed in exasperation and nodded. Someone of his importance obviously didn't have the time to spend with them, but he detested gingham dresses and homespun suits cluttering up his outer office.

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The president, stern faced and with dignity, strutted toward the couple.

The lady told him, "We had a son who attended Harvard for one year. He loved Harvard. He was happy here. But about a year ago, he was accidentally killed. My husband and I would like to erect a memorial to him, somewhere on campus."

The president wasn't touched.... He was shocked.

"Madam," he said, gruffly, "we can't put up a statue for every person who attended Harvard and died. If we did, this place would look like a cemetery."

"Oh, no," the lady explained quickly. "We don't want to erect a statue. We thought we would like to give a building to Harvard."

The president rolled his eyes. He glanced at the gingham dress and homespun suit, and then exclaimed, "A building! Do you have any earthly idea how much a building costs? We have over seven and a half million dollars in the physical buildings here at Harvard."

For a moment the lady was silent.

The president was pleased. Maybe he could get rid of them now. The lady turned to her husband and said quietly, "Is that all it costs to start a university? Why don't we just start our own?"

Her husband nodded.

The president's face wilted in confusion and bewilderment. Mr. and Mrs. Leland Stanford got up and walked away, travelling to Palo Alto, California where they established the University that bears their name, Stanford University, a memorial to a son that Harvard no longer cared about.

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# Determination

In 1883, a creative engineer named John Roebling was inspired by an idea to build a spectacular bridge connecting New York with the Long Island. However bridge building experts throughout the world thought that this was an impossible feat and told Roebling to forget the idea. It just could not be done. It was not practical. It had never been done before.

Roebling could not ignore the vision he had in his mind of this bridge. He thought about it all the time and he knew deep in his heart that it could be done. He just had to share the dream with someone else. After much discussion and persuasion he managed to convince his son Washington, an up and coming engineer, that the bridge in fact could be built.

Working together for the first time, the father and son developed concepts of how it could be accomplished and how the obstacles could be overcome. With great excitement and inspiration, and the headiness of a wild challenge before them, they hired their crew and began to build their dream bridge.

The project started well, but when it was only a few months underway a tragic accident on the site took the life of John Roebling. Washington was injured and left with a certain amount of brain damage, which resulted in him not being able to walk or talk or even move.



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“We told them so.”

“Crazy men and their crazy dreams.”

“It’s foolish to chase wild visions.”

Everyone had a negative comment to make and felt that the project should be scrapped since the Roebling were the only ones who knew how the bridge could be built. In spite of his handicap Washington was never discouraged and still had a burning desire to complete the bridge and his mind was still as sharp as ever.

He tried to inspire and pass on his enthusiasm to some of his friends, but they were too daunted by the task. As he lay on his bed in his hospital room, with the sunlight streaming through the windows, a gentle breeze blew the flimsy white curtains apart and he was able to see the sky and the tops of the trees outside for just a moment.

It seemed that there was a message for him not to give up. Suddenly an idea hit him. All he could do was move one finger and he decided to make the best use of it. By moving this, he slowly developed a code of communication with his wife.

He touched his wife’s arm with that finger, indicating to her that he wanted her to call the engineers again. Then he used the same method of tapping her arm to tell the engineers what to do.

It seemed foolish but the project was under way again.

For 13 years Washington tapped out his instructions with his finger on his wife’s arm, until the bridge was finally completed. Today the spectacular Brooklyn Bridge stands in all its glory as a tribute to the

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triumph of one man's indomitable spirit and his determination not to be defeated by circumstances. It is also a tribute to the engineers and their team work, and to their faith in a man who was considered mad by half the world. It stands too as a tangible monument to the love and devotion of his wife who for 13 long years patiently decoded the messages of her husband and told the engineers what to do.



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## 365 STORIES (PART-5)

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# The Crystal Ball

In the south of Spain, there was a small village whose people were very joyful and lucky. The children played under the shade of trees in the gardens of their home. A shepherd boy whose name was Nasir, stayed near the village with his father, mother and grandmother. Early morning each day, he took his herd of goats up the hills to find a suitable place for them to graze. In the afternoon he would return with them to the village. At night his grandmother would tell him a story. The story of stars. This story really interested Nasir. One of those days, as Nasir was watching his herd and playing, he suddenly saw a wonderful light behind the flower bush. When he came towards the branches he saw a transparent and most beautiful crystal ball.

The crystal ball was glittering like a star. Nasir carefully took it in his hand and turned it around. With surprise suddenly he heard a weak voice coming from the crystal ball. It said; "You can make a wish that your heart desires and I will fulfil it." Nasir could not believe that he had actually heard a voice. But he became so engrossed in his thoughts for he had so many wishes but he must wish for something which was impossible like the wish to be able to fly. He said to himself, if I wait till tomorrow I will remember many things. He put the crystal ball in a bag and gathered the herd, happily returned back to the village. He decided that he would not tell anyone about the crystal ball. On the following day also, Nasir could not decide what to wish for, because he really had everything he needed.

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The days passed as usual, and Nasir appeared to be so cheerful that the people around him were amazed to see his cheerful disposition. One day a boy followed Nasir and his herd and hid behind a tree. Nasir as usual sat in one corner, took out the crystal ball and for a few moments looked at it.

The boy waited for the moment when Nasir would go to sleep. Then he took the crystal ball and ran away. When he arrived in the village, he called all the people and showed them the crystal ball.

The citizens of that village took the crystal ball in their hand and turned it around with surprise.

Suddenly they heard a voice from inside the crystal ball, which says, "I can fulfil your wish."

One person took the ball and screamed, "I want one bag full of gold." Another took the ball and said loudly, "I want two chests full of jewellery."

Some of them wished that they would have their own palace with a grand door made from pure gold, instead of their old houses. Some also wished for bags full of jewellery, but nobody asked for gardens in their palaces. All their wishes were fulfilled, but still the citizens of the village were not happy.

They were jealous because the person that had a palace had no gold and the person that had the gold had no palace. For this reason, the citizens of the village were angry and were not speaking to each other. There was not even one garden which existed in the village where the children could play. The patience of the children was running out and

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they were uncomfortable. Nasir and his family were happy and pleased. Every morning and afternoon he would play. The children could not wait anymore and decided to return the crystal ball to Nasir. The parents and neighbours went to him. The children said to Nasir: "When we had a small village we all were happy and joyful."

The parent also spoke: "In one way or another nobody is happy. The expensive palaces and jewellery only bring us pain."

When Nasir saw that the people were really regretful, he said, "I have not wished till now, if you really want everything to return to its own place, then I will wish for it." Everyone happily agreed. Nasir took the crystal ball in his hand turned around and wished that the village become the same as it was before. Everyone quickly turned towards the village and saw that it had become the same old village with gardens full of trees and fruits.

Once again the people started to live happily and the children played under the shade of trees.



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### Short Stories-8

#### You are beautiful

It's a phrase that my mother uses a lot. I used to wonder, "How in the world can Mother call them beautiful?" I am a logical, statistical man. I call things as I see them. I didn't see beauty. My mother would tell people this with an enthusiasm they could feel. She was genuine. She wasn't telling them they were beautiful to get something from them. Most of the time, they were trying to get something from her.

I wondered for years what was wrong with Mother's perception and vision. Couldn't she see that all of the people she called beautiful weren't beautiful?

You were beautiful only if you had a certain figure and face that was classed as beautiful by the opinions of the world and people. Yet when my mother spoke, people smiled as though a glamour magazine had listed them as one of the beautiful people of the year.

It took me years to finally understand my mother's vision and the phrase, "Beauty is in the eye of the beholder." My mother had a spirit that could see the beauty in a person. Most only look on the outside and then compare what they see with the standards the world has given them. That was what I was doing. Today when you leave your house, carefully look at the first person whom you see and notice how beautiful they are.

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They may be balding, fat, wrinkled, pimply, or any of the other things the world frowns upon as beauty. Look at them closely and look for the beauty. If you really look, you'll see it.

I didn't believe that at first until I tried it. Sure enough, as I stared and opened another set of eyes, I was able to see the beauty in every person. No matter how rough or worn a person looked, each pain-etched line held a glimpse of beauty.

You just have to look for the beauty. It's there.

### On the other hand

Consider this story of two men, Danny and Wilfred, with contrasting levels of social intelligence. Danny's plane was delayed for over five hours. He takes a cab to his hotel in Boston, where he's attending a convention. Unfortunately, he didn't guarantee his room reservation, and the hotel's now completely full.

"What do you expect me to do?" he screams at the reservation clerk. "I'm terribly sorry, sir, but I can call another hotel a few miles away and see if they have a vacancy," the young clerk replies.

"Absolutely not!" he shouts, attracting attention from across the lobby. "This is where I made my reservation, and this is where I'm staying."

Needless to say, Danny alienates the one person in his world who can make a difference for him at this point in time. The clerk, familiar with people like Danny, stands her ground. In his flurry of anger, Danny eventually has to find another hotel on his own.

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Wilfred, who overhears the entire performance, is in the same situation.

However, he tries a completely different tact.

“It must be really tough for you dealing with people like that all day,” he calmly says to the clerk.

“Not really, and it doesn’t happen all that often.” She smiles.

“Well, I’m really sorry to bother you, but I was on the same plane that was delayed,” Wilfred tells her. “Was there anything available? I’d even sleep in a closet somewhere if you could find one.”

She laughs. “Well, let me see what I can do.”

After about five minutes of computer clicking, she looks up and reports, “If you’re willing to wait a few hours, I can get you a room. It’s actually on the concierge floor and comes with breakfast and hors d’oeuvres. I can give it to you at the same price. You can check your luggage and wait in the bar, if you’d like.”

“Wow, that sounds great. Thanks,” he replies, very grateful.

When dealing with others, you often don’t have to give very much in order to get the result you need. Paying attention to others and managing your own emotions can have tremendous payoffs.

### **A Funny True Story**

Police Officer, Bilal; found a perfect hiding place for watching for speeding motorists. He had always wanted to teach those reckless drivers a lesson and the heavy fines earned him commission too. For the past two weeks he was fining and feeling happy to have straightened many a young guys who just wanted some thrill, but today it was different.



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The officer was amazed when everyone was under the speed limit, so Bilal came out of his hiding to investigate and find the problem, people can't just turn innocent overnight, he thought to himself. As soon as he came out of the bushes he saw a 10 year old brat who was standing on the side of the road with a huge hand painted sign which said "Radar Trap Ahead – Drive in speed limit of 50 kilometre per hour" A little more investigative work led the officer to the boy's accomplice, another boy about a little ahead of the radar trap with a sign reading "Tips for saving the fine" and a bucket at his feet, full of change.

### Easy to Swallow?

A lady and her husband had just finished tucking their young ones into bed one evening when they heard crying coming from the children's room. Rushing in, they found the youngest one crying hysterically.

He had accidentally swallowed a 1 rupee coin and was sure he was going to die. No amount of talking could change his mind. Trying to calm him, his dad palmed a 1 rupee coin that he happened to have in his pocket and pretended to remove it from Tariq's ear. Tariq, naturally, was delighted. In a flash, he snatched it from his father's hand, swallowed it demanding cheerfully - 'Do it again, Dad!'

### Heard This One Before?

A man boasted to a friend about his new hearing aid, 'It's the most expensive one I've ever had, it cost me 10,000 rupees and I got it especially from the US through my brother. You know these Pakistani and Chinese ones are cheap and no good.'

But kids, as you know that pride cometh before a fall.

His friend asked, 'What kind is it?'

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The braggart replied, 'Half past four.'

### Will's Experience at Gatwick

After his return from Rome, Will couldn't find his luggage in the London Gatwick airport baggage area. So he went to the lost luggage office and told the woman there that his bags hadn't shown up on the carousel. She smiled and told him not to worry because they were trained professionals and he was in good hands.

She said she needed to ask a few questions to track down his luggage.

'I will need your cooperation to find your bag,' she said.

'What is your name and which flight have you flown with?' she asked.

Will said, 'My name is Will Collin and I have landed here with United Airlines.'

'Now', she asked Will, 'has your plane arrived yet?'



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# Centre of the Universe

Copernicus measured and observed the planets and stars. He gathered, compiled, and compared the observations of dozens of other astronomers. In so doing Copernicus challenged a 2,000-year-old belief that the earth sat motionless at the centre of the universe and planets, sun, and stars rotated around it. His work represents the beginning point for our understanding of the universe around us and of modern astronomy.

He was also the first to use scientific observation as the basis for the development of a scientific theory. (Before his time logic and thought had been the basis for theory.) In this way Copernicus launched both the field of modern astronomy and modern scientific methods.

In 1499 Copernicus graduated from the University of Bologna, Italy; was ordained a priest in the Catholic Church; and returned to Poland to work for his uncle, Bishop Waczenrode, at the Frauenburg Cathedral. Copernicus was given the top rooms in a cathedral tower so he could continue his astronomy measurements.

At that time people still believed a model of the universe created by the Greek scientist, Ptolemy, more than 1,500 years earlier. According to Ptolemy, the earth was the centre of the universe and never moved. The sun and planets revolved around the earth in great circles, while the

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distant stars perched way out on the great spherical shell of space. But careful measurement of the movement of planets didn't fit with Ptolemy's model.

So astronomers modified Ptolemy's universe of circles by adding more circles within circles, or epi-circles. The model now claimed that each planet travelled along a small circle (epi-circle) that rolled along that planet's big orbital circle around the earth. Century after century, the errors in even *this* model grew more and more evident. More epi-circles were added to the model so that planets moved along epi-circles within epi-circles.

Copernicus hoped to use "modern" (sixteenth-century) technology to improve on Ptolemy's measurements and, hopefully, eliminate some of the epi-circles.

For almost 20 years Copernicus painstakingly measured the position of the planets each night. But his tables of findings still made no sense in Ptolemy's model.

Over the years, Copernicus began to wonder what the movement of the planets would look like from another moving planet. When his calculations based on this idea more accurately predicted the planets' actual movements, he began to wonder what the motion of the planets would look like if the *earth* moved. Immediately, the logic of this notion became apparent.

Each planet appeared at different distances from the earth at different times throughout a year. Copernicus realized that this meant Earth could not lie at the centre of the planets' circular paths.

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From 20 years of observations he knew that only the sun did not vary in apparent size over the course of a year. This meant that the distance from Earth to the sun had to always remain the same. If the earth was not at the centre, then the sun had to be. He quickly calculated that if he placed the sun at the universe's centre and had the earth orbit around it, he could completely eliminate all epi-circles and have the known planets travel in simple circles around the sun.

But would anyone believe Copernicus's new model of the universe? The whole world—and especially the all-powerful Catholic Church—believed in an Earth-cantered universe.

For fear of retribution from the Church, Copernicus dared not release his findings during his lifetime. They were made public in 1543, and even then they were consistently scorned and ridiculed by the Church, astronomers, and universities alike. Finally, 60 years later, first Johannes Kepler and then Galileo Galilei proved that Copernicus was right.

However, it was well before when Ibne Hazm and Al-Bairuni had reached this conclusion in the Muslim world.



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# The Big Brain

Albert Einstein is one of only three or four scientists in history who have changed the fundamental ways in which humans view the universe. Einstein's theory of relativity changed humankind's core assumptions concerning the nature of the universe and of Earth's and of humans' place in it.

The twentieth century's developments in technology, science, and math owe their foundation to this unassuming scientist in a deep and fundamental way. He has touched our lives probably more than any other scientist in history. But for the first 26 years of his life, no one thought he had any chance of entering the world of science at all.

Raised in Munich, Germany, Albert Einstein showed no early signs of genius. He was described as a dull child who didn't play well with other children. Grammar school teachers called him irksome and disruptive. At 16 he was expelled from school. Albert's father encouraged him to apply to the Polytechnic Institute in Zurich, Switzerland, and learn a trade to help support the family.

But Albert failed the entrance exam. A school administrator was, however, impressed with Albert's math abilities and arranged for him to complete high school in nearby Aarau, Switzerland. At 17, Albert transferred to Zurich.

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There he showed promise in math and science, but piled up far too many discipline reports. He was free with his opinions whether they were offensive or not. His teachers gave him bad reports. One called him “a lazy dog.”

Einstein hoped to teach after graduation but his grades weren't good enough. He dropped out of science in disgust and supported himself with odd jobs. In 1902 he landed a job as a clerk in the Swiss Patent Office, assigned to check the technical correctness of patent applications. It appeared that all doors leading to a science career had been firmly closed.

It was while riding on a Berne, Switzerland, and trolley car in the spring of 1904 that the image first flashed across Albert Einstein's mind. It was an image of a man in an elevator that was falling from a great height. Einstein realized immediately that the image of this “thought experiment” could bring focus to a problem that had been plaguing him (and all of science) for years.

Einstein realized that the man in the elevator would not know he was falling because, relative to his surroundings (the elevator), he wasn't falling. The man—like us—would not be able to detect that he (and his elevator) were caught in, and being pulled by, a gravitational field. If a horizontal light beam entered the side of the elevator, it would strike the far wall higher up because the elevator would have dropped while the light beam crossed. To the man, it would appear that the light beam bent upwards. From our perspective (*relative to us*), gravitational fields bend light. Light not only could be, but routinely was, bent by the gravitational fields of stars and planets.

It was a revolutionary concept, worthy of one of the world's greatest scientific minds.

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Einstein regularly used these imaginative “thought experiments” to shed light on complex questions of general principles. It was a new and unique way to approach the study of physics and led Einstein to write a series of four papers, which he submitted to a science journal in 1905. One of those four papers presented the special theory of relativity (relativity principles applied to bodies either moving at a steady velocity or at rest). Impressed, the journal published all four papers in a single issue. Another presented Einstein’s relation between matter and energy.

The papers from this “amateur” mathematician had a deep, instant, and profound effect in the scientific community. One was accepted as a doctoral thesis by Zurich University, which granted Einstein a Ph.D.

Virtually all physicists shifted their studies to focus on Einstein’s theories.

In 1916, with war raging across Europe, Einstein published his general theory of relativity, which described relativity theory applied to objects moving in more complex ways with non linear acceleration. The world applauded.





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## Prophet Brothers - 1

### From birth to migration

Allah Ta'ala has narrated the story of Hazrat Musa عليه السلام in a lot of detail because it has twofold importance. Firstly it has many lessons for us and secondly, the story is about the mentality and nature of the Jews who caused much trouble to Hazrat Musa عليه السلام and are still causing the world many difficulties. We must know about their thinking to avoid the problems they cause us. The infidelity and rebellion of the Jews is not limited to Hazrat Musa عليه السلام and his brother Hazrat Haroon عليه السلام they have even martyred many prophets عليه السلام who were sent for guidance.

The pharaoh who ruled Egypt was a tyrant who oppressed the descendants of Yaqoob عليه السلام, known as the children of Israel (Bani Israel). He used every means to torment them. They were kept in bondage and forced to work for him for small wages or nothing. Under this system the people obeyed and worshipped the pharaoh, and the ruling class carried out his orders, thereby authorizing his tyranny and crazy whims.

The pharaoh wanted the people to obey him and believe in him only as if he were the god himself. Perhaps, during that time, there were many classes of people who did not believe in or practice polytheism; however, they kept this to themselves and outwardly did as they were expected to do, without revolting or revealing themselves to anyone.

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Thus, successive dynasties came to Egypt and assumed that they were gods or their representative or spokesmen.

Years passed, and a despotic king, who was adored by the Egyptians (Copts), ruled Egypt. This king saw the children of Israel multiplying and prospering. He heard them talking about one of Israel's sons would dethrone the pharaoh of Egypt. Another tradition states that it was Pharaoh himself who had the vision. Ibn 'Abbas رضي الله عنه narrated, "Pharaoh saw in his vision a fire, which came from Jerusalem and burned the houses of the Egyptians, and all Copts, and did not do any harm to the children of Israel. When he woke up, he was horrified. He then gathered his priests and magicians and asked them about this vision. They said, 'This means a boy will be born of them and the Egyptian people will perish at his hands.' That is why Pharaoh commanded that all male children of the children of Israel be killed."

Either way, the Pharaoh issued a decree to slay any male child that would be born to the children of Israel. This was carried out until the experts of economics said to Pharaoh, "The aged of the children of Israel die and the young are slaughtered. This will lead to their annihilation. As a result, Pharaoh will lose the manpower of those who work for him, those whom he enslaves, and their women whom he exploits. It is better to regulate this procedure by initiating the following policy: males should be slaughtered in one year but spared to live the next year." Pharaoh found that solution to be safer economically.

Haroon عليه السلام was born in a year that boys were spared. Musa عليه السلام was born in a year when boys were to be slain thus his birth caused his mother much terror. She was afraid he would be slain, so she nursed him secretly.

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Allah ﷻ says:

These are verses of the clear Book. We recite to you a part of the story of Musa and Pharaoh with truth for a people who believe. Indeed, Pharaoh had become high-handed in the land, and had divided its people into different groups; he used to persecute a group of them, slaughtering their sons and keeping their women alive. Indeed he was one of the mischief-makers, while We intended to favour those who were held as weak in the land, and to make them leaders and make them inheritors, and give them power in the land, and to show Pharaoh, Haman and their armies the very thing they were fearing from them. We inspired the mother of Musa saying, 'Suckle him (Musa). Then once you fear about him, cast him in the river, and do not fear, and do not grieve. Surely We are going to bring him back to you and appoint him one of (Our) messengers.' (Ch 28: 2-7 Quran)

No sooner had the divine revelation finished that she obeyed the sacred and merciful call. She was commanded to make a basket for Musa ﷺ. She nursed him, put him into the basket, then went to the shore of the Nile and threw it into the water. Her mother's heart, the most merciful one in the world, grieved as she threw her son into the Nile. However, she was aware that Allah ﷻ was much more merciful to Musa ﷺ than to her, that He loved him more than her. Allah was his Lord and the Lord of the Nile.

Hardly had the basket touched the water of the Nile than Allah issued His command to the waves to be calm and gentle while carrying the child would one day be a prophet. She instructed her daughter to follow the course of the basket and to report back to her. As the daughter followed the floating basket along the riverbank, she found herself right in the palace grounds and saw what was unfolding before her eyes.

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The basket came to rest at the riverbank, which skirted the king's palace. The palace servants found the basket with the baby and took it to the Pharaoh and his queen. When the queen saw the lovely infant, Allah instilled in her a strong love for this baby. Pharaoh's wife was very different from Pharaoh. He was a disbeliever; she was a believer. He was cruel; she was merciful. He was a tyrant; she was delicate and goodhearted.

Pharaoh was much amazed when he saw his wife hugging this baby. She requested her husband: "Let me keep the baby and let him be a son to us."

And the wife of Pharaoh said, (to Pharaoh about Musa), 'He may be a delight of eye for me and you. Do not kill him. It is hoped that he will be of benefit to us, or we will adopt him as a son'. And they were not aware (of what was going to happen). (Ch 28:9 Quran)

The queen summoned a few nurses to take care of the baby but it wasn't comfortable with any nurse. Seeing the queen's anxiety, Musa's ~~brother~~ sister said she knew a nurse who would affectionately take care of the baby. They asked her why she was following the floating basket. She said she did so out of curiosity. Her excuse sounded reasonable, so they believed her. They ordered her to rush and fetch the woman she was talking about. Her mother also was waiting with a heavy heart, worried about the fate of her baby. Just then her daughter rushed in with the good news. Her heart lifted and she lost no time in reaching the palace.

The child was comfortable with the mother. Pharaoh was astonished and asked, "Who are you? This child has refused all nurses but you."

Had she told the truth, Pharaoh would have known that the child was an Israelite and would have killed Musa ~~brother~~ instantly. However, Allah

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gave her inner strength and she replied, "I am a good nurse and no child refuses me." This answer satisfied Pharaoh.

When Musa عليه السلام grew, she was allowed to visit him. Musa عليه السلام was raised in the palace as a prince.

Allah تبارك وتعالى had granted Musa عليه السلام good health, strength, knowledge, and wisdom. The weak and oppressed turned to him for protection and justice.

One day in the main city, he saw two men fighting. One was an Israelite, who was being beaten by the other, an Egyptian. On seeing Musa عليه السلام, the Israelite begged him for help. Musa عليه السلام became involved in the dispute and, in a state of anger, struck a heavy blow on the Egyptian, who died on the spot. Upon realizing that he had killed a human being, heart of Musa عليه السلام was filled with deep sorrow, and immediately he begged Allah تبارك وتعالى for forgiveness.

He had not intended to kill the man. He pleaded with Almighty Allah to forgive him, and he felt a sense of peace filling his whole being. Thereafter Musa عليه السلام began to show more patience and sympathy towards people.

Musa عليه السلام knew that the penalty for killing an Egyptian was death. Allah تبارك وتعالى tells us in Quran Kareem:

Once he entered the city at a time when its people were heedless; so he found in it two men fighting each other: This one was from his own group, and that one from his enemies. So the one from his own group called him for help against the one who was from his enemies. So Musa gave him a blow with his fist and finished him off. (Then) He (Musa) said

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(out of remorse), 'This is some of Satan's act. He is indeed a clear enemy who misleads (people).'

He said, 'O my Lord, I have wronged myself, so forgive me. So He forgave him. Indeed He is the most Forgiving, Very-Merciful.' He (Musa) said, 'O my Lord! As You have favoured me, I will never be a supporter of the sinners.' Then next morning he was fearful in the city, waiting (for what comes next) when the man who sought his help the day before, shouted to him for help (again). Musa said to him, 'You are surely a clear trouble-maker.' Thereafter when he intended to grasp at the one who was an enemy to both of them, he (i.e. the Israelite) said, 'O Musa, do you want to kill me as you have killed a person yesterday? Your intention is only to become a tyrant in the land, and you do not intend to be one of the peace-makers.'

And there came a man running from the farthest part of the city. He said, 'The chiefs are counselling each other about you, so that they kill you. So, leave (the city). I am one of your well-wishers.'

So, he went out of it (the city), looking around in a state of fear. He said, 'O my Lord, save me from the cruel people.' (Ch 28:15-21 Quran)

Hazrat Musa ~~عليه السلام~~ left Egypt in a hurry without going to Pharaoh's palace or changing his clothes. Nor was he prepared for travelling. He did not have a beast of burden upon which to ride, and he was not in a caravan. Instead, he left as soon as the believer came and warned him of Pharaoh's plans.

He travelled in the direction of the country of Midian, which was the nearest inhabited land between Syria and Egypt. His only companion in

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this hot desert was Allah ﷻ, and his only provision was piety. There was not a single root to pick to lessen his hunger. The hot sand burned the soles of his feet. However, fearing pursuit by Pharaoh's men, he forced himself to continue on. He travelled for eight nights, hiding during the day. After crossing the main desert, he reached a watering hole outside Midian where shepherds were watering their flocks.

No sooner had Musa ﷺ reached the Midian than he threw himself under a tree to rest. He suffered from hunger and fatigue. The soles of his feet felt as if they were worn out from hard walking on sand and rocks and from the dust. He did not have any money to buy a new pair of sandals, nor to buy food or drink. Musa ﷺ noticed a band of shepherds watering their sheep. He went to the spring, where he saw two young women preventing their sheep from mixing with the others.

Musa ﷺ sensed that the women were in need of help. Forgetting his thirst, he drew nearer to them and asked if he could help them in any way.

And when he arrived at the waters of Madian, he found a large number of people watering (their animals) and found, aloof from them, two women keeping (their animals) back. He said, 'What is the matter with you?' They said, 'We cannot water (our animals) until these shepherds take (their animals) back after watering them, and our father is very old man.'

So he (Musa) watered (their animals) for them, then he turned to a shade and said, 'My Lord, I am in need of whatever good you send down to me.' (Ch 28:23-24 Quran)

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The young ladies returned home earlier than usual, which surprised their father. They related the incident at the spring which was the reason that they were back early. Their father sent one of his daughters to invite the stranger to his home.

Then one of the two women came to him, walking bashfully. She said, 'My father is calling you, so that he may give you a reward for watering our animals.' So when he (Musa) came to him (the father of the women) and narrated to him the whole story, the latter said, 'Do not fear; you have escaped from the wrongdoing people.'

One of the two women said, 'Dear father, hire him; the best man you can hire is someone who is strong, trustworthy.'

He (the father) said (to Musa), 'I wish to marry to you one of these two daughters of mine on condition that you act as my employee for eight years. Then if you complete ten (years) it will be of your own accord. And I do not want to put you in any trouble; you will find me, Insha Allah (God-willing) one of the righteous.' (Ch 28:25-28 Quran)





## The Germ Killing Invention

Penicillin has saved millions of lives—tens of thousands during the last years of World War II alone. The first antibiotic to successfully fight bacterial infections and disease, penicillin was called a miracle cure for a dozen killer diseases rampant in the early twentieth century.

Penicillin created a whole new arsenal of drugs in doctors' toolkits to fight disease and infection. It opened the door to entire new families and new generations of antibiotic drugs.

Penicillin started the vast industry of antibiotic drugs, and ushered in a new era of medicine.

In 1928, 47-year-old Scottish born Alexander Fleming was named chief biochemist at St. Mary's Hospital in London and given a basement laboratory tucked in next to the boiler room.

As the staff bacteriologist, he grew (or "cultured") bacteria in small, round, glass plates for hospital study and experiment. Using microscopic amounts of a bacterium (often collected from a sick patient), he grew enough of each to determine why the patient was sick and how best to fight the infection. Small dishes of deadly staphylococci, streptococci, and pneumococci bacteria were lined and labelled across the one lab bench that stretched the length of Fleming's lab.

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Moulds were the one great hazard to Fleming's lab operation. Fleming's lab alternated between being drafty and stuffy, depending on the weather and how hard the boiler worked next door. His only ventilation was a pair of windows that opened at ground level to the park-like gardens of the hospital. Afternoon breezes blew leaves, dust, and a great variety of airborne moulds through those windows. It seemed impossible to keep moulds from drifting into, and contaminating, most of the bacteria Fleming tried to grow.

On September 28, 1928, Fleming's heart sank as he realized that a prized dish of pure (and deadly) staphylococci bacteria had been ruined by a strange, green mould. The mould must have floated into the dish sometime early the previous evening and had been multiplying since then. Greenish mould fuzz now covered half the dish.

Fleming grunted and sighed. Then he froze. Where this strange green mould had grown, the staphylococci bacteria had simply disappeared. Even bacteria more than an inch from the mould had turned transparent and sickly.

What kind of mould could destroy one of the most hearty, tenacious, and deadly bacteria on earth? No other substance then known to man could attack staphylococci so successfully.

It took two weeks for Fleming to isolate and culture enough of the tough green mould to complete identification: *Penicillium notatum*. Within a month he had discovered that the mould secreted a substance that killed bacteria. He began to call this substance "penicillin."

Through culture dish experiments he discovered that penicillin could easily destroy all the common human-killing bacteria—staphylococci,

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streptococci, pneumococci, even the toughest of all, the bacilli of diphtheria. The only bacterium penicillin fought but did not destroy was the weak, sensitive bacterium that caused influenza (flu).

Fleming spent six months testing penicillin on rabbits to establish that the drug was safe for human use before, in late 1929, announcing the discovery of his miracle mould that had drifted in the window.

However, penicillin was difficult and slow to grow. It worked wonders but was available in such small quantities that it did little practical good. In 1942 Dorothy Hodgkin, a British researcher, developed a new process to decipher the structure of a penicillin molecule. It took her 15 months and thousands of X-ray images of the molecules in a penicillin crystal to identify each of the 35 atoms in a penicillin molecule.

Dr. Hodgkin was awarded the 1964 Nobel Prize for her work.

American doctors Howard Florey and Ernst Chain were able to use Hodgkin's map to synthetically produce penicillin molecules in mass production beginning in 1943. For their effort, Florey and Chain were awarded the 1945 Nobel Prize in Medicine jointly with Alexander Fleming, the discoverer of penicillin.

American researchers in Peoria, Illinois, were able to develop commercial production of penicillin first, because two of penicillin's favourite foods turned out to be a strain of local Illinois corn and rotting cantaloupes, donated by a Peoria market. Those food bases helped researchers increase their production of penicillin from 400 million to over 650 billion units a month.



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## 365 STORIES (PART-5)

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# Prophet Brothers – 2

## The Return

Time passed, and he lived in seclusion far from his family and his people. This period of ten years was of importance in his life. It was a period of major preparation. Certainly mind of Musa عليه السلام was absorbed in the stars every night. He followed the sunrise and the sunset every day. He pondered on the plant and how it splits and soil and appears thereafter. He contemplated water and how the earth is revived by it and flourishes after its death.

Of course, he was immersed in the Glorious Book of Allah, open to the insight and heart. He was immersed in the existence of Allah. All these became latent within him. The religion of Musa عليه السلام was the same as that of Yaqoob عليه السلام, which was Islamic monotheism. His forefather was Yaqoob عليه السلام the grandson of Ibrahim عليه السلام. Musa عليه السلام, therefore, was one of the descendants of Ibrahim عليه السلام and every prophet who came after Ibrahim عليه السلام was one of the successors of Ibrahim عليه السلام. In addition to physical preparation, there was a similar spiritual preparation. It was made in complete seclusion, in the middle of the desert, and in the places of pasture. Silence was his way of life, and seclusion was his vehicle. Allah the Almighty prepared for His prophet the tools he would need later on to righteously bear the commands of Allah, the Exalted.

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One day after the end of this period, a vague homesickness arose in heart of Musa عليه السلام. He wanted to return to Egypt. He was fast and firm in making his decision, telling his wife, "Tomorrow we shall leave for Egypt." His wife said to herself, "There are a thousand dangers in departing that have not yet been revealed." However, she obeyed her husband.

Musa عليه السلام himself did not know the secret of the quick and sudden decision to return to Egypt. After all, he had fled from their ten years ago with a price on his head. Why should he go back now? Did he look forward to seeing his mother and brother? Did he think of visiting Pharaoh's wife who had raised him and who loved him as if she was his mother?

No one knows what went through the mind of Hazrat Musa عليه السلام when he returned to Egypt. All we know is that a mute obedience to Allah's destinies impelled him to make a decision and he did. These supreme destinies steered his steps towards a matter of great importance.

Musa عليه السلام left Midian with his family and travelled through the desert until he reached Mount Sinai. There Musa عليه السلام discovered that he had lost his way. He sought Allah's direction and was shown the right course. At nightfall they reached Mount Tur. Musa عليه السلام noticed a fire in the distance. "I shall fetch a firebrand to warm us."

Has there come to you the story of Musa? When he saw a fire and said to his family, 'Stay here. I have noticed a fire. Perhaps I can bring you an ember from it, or find some guidance by the fire.' So when he came to it, he was called, 'O Musa, it is Me, your Lord, so remove your shoes; you are in the sacred valley of Tuwa. I have chosen you (for prophet-hood), so listen to what is revealed: Surely, I AM ALLAH. There is no god but

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Myself, so worship Me, and establish Salah for My remembrance. Surely, the Hour (i.e. the Day of Judgment) has to come. I would keep it secret, so that everyone is given a return for the effort one makes. So the one who does not believe in it and follows his desires must not make you neglectful of it, otherwise you will perish. And what is that in your right hand, O Musa?’

He said, ‘It is my staff. I lean on it, and I beat down leaves with it for my sheep, and I have many other uses for it.’

He said, ‘Throw it down O Musa.’

So, he threw it down, and suddenly it was a snake, running around.

He said, ‘Pick it up, and be not scared. We shall restore it to its former state. And press your hand under your arm, and it will come out (brightly) white without any disease, as another sign, so that We may show you some of Our great signs. Go to Pharaoh. He has really exceeded all bounds.’

He said, ‘My Lord, put my heart at peace for me, and make my task easy for me and remove the knot from my tongue, so that they may understand my speech. And make for me an assistant from my own family, that is, Harun, my brother. Enhance with him my strength, and make him share my task, so that we proclaim Your purity in abundance, and remember You in abundance. You are certainly watchful over us.’

He said, ‘You have been granted your request O Musa. And We had bestowed Our favour on you another time, when We revealed to your mother what was to be revealed, that is, ‘Put him (the baby) in the chest, then cast it into the river, then let the river throw it by the shore, and it will be picked up by one who is enemy to Me and enemy to him.’ ‘And I

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had cast love on you from Myself (so that you might be favourite of all), and that you might be brought up under My eye. (Remember) when your sister was going (to the family of Pharaoh) and was saying, 'Shall I lead you to one who nurses him? 'Thus We brought you back to your mother, so that her eyes might have comfort and she might not grieve. And you had killed a person, then We brought you out of the trouble; and We tested you with a great ordeal. Then you lived a number of years amidst the people of Madian. After all this, you came, O Musa, to a destined point of time. I have fashioned you for Myself. Go, you and your brother, with My signs, and do not be slack in My remembrance. Go, both of you, to Pharaoh; he has indeed transgressed all limits. So speak to him in soft words. May be, he accepts the advice or fears (Allah ﷻ).

They said, 'Our Lord, we fear that he will hasten against us, or will become (more) rebellious (against You).'

He said, 'Do not be afraid. I AM surely with you both. I hear and I see. So, come to him and say, 'We are the messengers of your Lord. So, let the children of Isra'il go with us, and do not persecute them. We have come to you with a sign from your Lord; and peace be upon the one who follows the guidance. Verily, it has been revealed to us that the punishment is for the one who denies and turns away.'" (Ch 20:9-48 Quran).

If you just think, Allah ﷻ had asked Hazrat Musa ﷺ simple and straightforward questions but Hazrat Musa ﷺ replied in detail. The reason is that when Allah ﷻ was talking to Hazrat Musa ﷺ he felt intense love and longing and wanted to keep on talking. Now just imagine if we go to Jannat we will also be able to talk and even see Allah ﷻ directly. Therefore we must make Allah ﷻ happy in this world to meet him in Jannat.

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Musa عليه السلام and Haroon عليه السلام went together to Pharaoh and delivered their message. Musa عليه السلام spoke to him about Allah تعالى, His mercy and His Paradise and about the obligations of monotheism and His worship.

Pharaoh listened to the speech of Musa عليه السلام with disrespect. He thought that Musa عليه السلام was crazy because he dared to question his supreme position. Then he raised his hand and asked, "What do you want?"

Musa عليه السلام answered, "I want you to send the children of Israel with us."

Pharaoh asked, "Why should I send them, as they are my slaves?"

Musa عليه السلام replied, "They are the slaves of Allah, Lord of the Worlds."

Pharaoh then inquired sarcastically if his name was Musa عليه السلام. Musa عليه السلام said, "Yes."

"Are you not the Musa عليه السلام whom we picked up from the Nile as a helpless baby? Are you not the Musa عليه السلام whom we reared in this palace, who ate and drank from our provisions and whom our wealth showered with charity? Are you not the Musa عليه السلام who is a fugitive, the killer of an Egyptian man, if my memory does not betray me? It is said that killing is an act of disbelief. Therefore, you were a disbeliever when you killed. You are a fugitive from justice and you come to speak to me! What were you talking about Musa عليه السلام, I forgot?"

Musa عليه السلام knew that Pharaoh's mentioning his past, his upbringing, and his receiving Pharaoh's charity was Pharaoh's way of threatening him.

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Musa عليه السلام ignored his sarcasm and explained that he was not a disbeliever when he killed the Egyptian, he only went astray and Allah the Almighty had not yet given him the revelation at that time. He made Pharaoh understand that he fled from Egypt because he was afraid of their revenge upon him, even though the killing was an accident. He informed him that Allah had granted him forgiveness and made him one of the messengers.

Allah Ta'ala has revealed to us part of the dialogue between Musa عليه السلام and Pharaoh:

So go, both of you, to Pharaoh and say, 'We both are messengers of the Lord of all the worlds, (sent with the message) that you must send the children of Isra'il with us'. He (Pharaoh) said, 'Did we not nourish you among us as a child? And you remained amidst us for years, and you did the blunder you did; still you are ungrateful.

He said, 'I did that at a time when I was mistaken. Then I fled away from you when I feared you. Thereafter my Lord granted wisdom to me, and made me one of the messengers. As for the favour with which you are obliging me, it is that you have enslaved the children of Isra'il.' Pharaoh said, 'What is the Lord of the worlds?' He (Musa) said, 'Lord of the heavens and the earth and whatever there is between them, if you are to believe.' He (The Pharaoh) said to those around him, 'Are you not hearing?' He (Musa) said, 'Your Lord and the Lord of your early forefathers.' He (Pharaoh) said, 'Your messenger who is sent to you is a mad man indeed.' He (Musa) said, 'Lord of the East and the West and whatever lies between them, if you are to understand.' He (Pharaoh) said, 'If you adopt a God other than me, I will certainly put you to prison.' He (Musa) said 'Will you (do this) even if I bring to you something evident?' He said, 'Then bring it, if you are truthful.' (Ch 26:16-31 Quran)

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The degree of the conflict expressed in this dialogue reached its apex; thus, the tone of dialogue changed. Musa عليه السلام used a convincing intellectual argument against Pharaoh. However, Pharaoh escaped from the circle of dialogue based on the logic and began a dialogue of another type, a type which Musa عليه السلام could not bear to follow; a dialogue menacing and threatening. Pharaoh deliberately adopted the style of the absolute ruler. He asked Musa عليه السلام how he dared to worship Allah! Did he not know that Pharaoh was a god?

After declaring his divinity, Pharaoh asked Musa عليه السلام how he dared to worship another god. The punishment for this crime was imprisonment. It was not permitted for anyone to worship anyone other than the Pharaoh. Musa عليه السلام understood that the intellectual arguments did not succeed. The calm dialogue was converted from sarcasm to mentioning charity, then to scorn, then to the threat of imprisonment.

He (Musa) said 'Will you (do this) even if I bring to you something evident?' He said, 'Then bring it, if you are truthful.' So, he threw down his staff, and in no time it was a serpent, clearly visible, and he drew out his hand, and right then it was a white light to the onlookers.

(Ch 26:30-33 Quran)

Pharaoh's amazement turned to terror. Fearing that his rule was in danger, he addressed his advisors: "These are two wizards who will strip you of your best traditions and drive you of the country with their magic. What do you advice?" they counselled Pharaoh to detain Musa عليه السلام and his brother while they summoned the cleverest magicians in the country. Then they too, could show their skills of magic and change sticks into serpents. In this way they sought to reduce the influence of the miracles of Musa عليه السلام on the masses.

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## Prophet Brothers – 3

### Miracles, trails and story of Qarun

Pharaoh detained Musa عليه السلام and Haroon عليه السلام. He dispatched couriers all over the land to enlist the best magicians. He offered each successful magician a big reward, including appointment as a royal courtier. On the customary festival day, which attracted citizens from all over the Egyptian empire, Pharaoh arranged for a public contest between Musa عليه السلام and the magicians. The people came in droves as near before when they heard of the greatest contest ever between Pharaoh's many magicians and a single man who claimed to be a prophet. They had also heard of a baby who had once floated down the river Nile in a basket, landed on Pharaoh's palace grounds, been reared as a prince, and who later had fled for killing an Egyptian with a single blow.

Everyone was eager and excited to watch this great contest. Before it began, Musa عليه السلام arose. There was a hush in the huge crowd. Musa عليه السلام addressed the magicians. "Woe unto you, if you invent a lie against Allah by calling His miracles magic and by not being honest with the Pharaoh. Woe unto you, if you do not know the difference between the truth and falsehood. Allah will destroy you with His punishment, for he who lies against Allah fails miserably."

Musa عليه السلام had spoke sincerely and made the magicians think. But they were overwhelmed by their greed for money and glory. They hoped

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to impress the people with their magic and to expose Musa عليه السلام as a fraud and a cheat.

Musa عليه السلام asked the magicians to perform first. They threw their magical objects down on the ground. Their staffs and ropes took the forms of wriggling serpents while the crowd watched in amazement. Pharaoh and his men applauded loudly. Then Musa عليه السلام threw his staff. It began to wriggle and became an enormous serpent. The people stood up, craning their necks for a better view. Pharaoh and his men sat silently as, one by one, huge serpent of Musa عليه السلام swallowed all the snakes. Musa عليه السلام bent to pick it up, and it became a staff in his hand.

So, the magicians were led (by the truth) to fall in prostration. They said, 'We have (now) believed in the Lord of Harun and Musa.' He (Pharaoh) said, 'You have believed in him before I permit you. This man is in fact your master who has taught you the magic. So I will certainly cut off your hands and your legs from opposite sides, and will crucify you on the trunks of palm-trees, and you shall know whose punishment, out of us, is more severe and more lasting.' They said, 'We will never prefer you over the clear signs that have come to us, and over Him who has created us. So, decide whatever you have to decide. You will decide only for this worldly life.' We have put our faith in our Lord, so that He forgives us for our sins and for the magic you compelled us to perform. And Allah is the Best and Everlasting.

Surely whoever comes to his Lord as a sinner, for him there is Jahannam in which he neither will die nor will live (a happy life).

And whoever will come to Him as believer, having done righteous deeds, for such people there are the highest ranks, the eternal gardens

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beneath which rivers flow, in which they shall live for ever. That is the reward for the one who has purified himself. (Ch 20:70-76 Quran)

Musa عليه السلام and Haroon عليه السلام left, and Pharaoh returned to his palace. Pharaoh was completely stupefied when he faced the two miracles. When Musa عليه السلام went out, Pharaoh's emotions changed from amazement and fear to violent rage. He quarrelled with his ministers and men, reviled them bitterly for no reason, and commanded them to get out of his presence. When he was left alone, he tried to think more calmly. He drank several cups of wine, but his anger did not abate.

Then he summoned all the ministers, leaders, and responsible men for a serious meeting. Pharaoh entered the meeting with a rigid face. It was obvious that he would never surrender easily. He had established a kingdom on the basis of his being a god worshipped by the Egyptian people. Now Musa عليه السلام came to destroy what he had built. Musa عليه السلام said that there was no Lord other than Allah تبارك وتعالى in existence. This meant that Pharaoh was a liar.

Pharaoh opened the session by throwing a sudden question at Haman: "Am I a liar, O Haman?"

Haman fell to his knees in amazement and asked: "Who dared to accuse Pharaoh of lying?"

Pharaoh said, "Has he (Musa عليه السلام) not said that there is a Lord in the heaven?"

Haman answered, "Musa عليه السلام is lying."

Turning his face to the other side, Pharaoh asserted impatiently: "I know he is a liar." Then he looked towards Haman (and cried):

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And Fir'awn (Pharaoh) said, 'O Haman, make a tower for me, perhaps I could reach the ways –the ways to the heavens, and peek towards the God of Musa. And indeed I deem him a liar.' That is how his evil deeds were made attractive to Fir'awn, and (how) he was held back from the way. The evil design of Fir'awn was (to end) in nothing but ruin.

(Ch 40:36-37 Quran).

Pharaoh issued his royal command to erect a lofty tower, its height to reach the heavens. Pharaoh's command depended fundamentally upon Egyptian civilization and its fondness for building what Pharaoh wanted. However, he ignored the rules of engineering. In spite of this, Haman assented (hypocritically), knowing that it was impossible to erect such a tower. He said that he would issue a command to build it immediately. "However, your majesty let me object to Pharaoh for the first time. You will never find anyone in the heavens. There is no god but you."

Pharaoh listened to a settled fact. Then he declared in the famous meeting his historic line:

And Pharaoh said, (to his people) 'O courtiers, I do not recognize any god for you other than me.' (Ch 28:38 Quran)

Pharaoh was absorbed in his new problem. A series of serious meetings began in his palace. He summoned those responsible for the army, the police and, what we call today his director of intelligence. He also summoned the ministers, princes, and priests. He called whoever had a powerful effect on the direction of events.

Pharaoh asked his director of intelligence: "What do people say?"

He said, "My men have spread among them that Musa ~~سليمان~~ won the contest because of a plot and that a major magician had joined with him

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in this plan. The plot had been disclosed, and we believe an unknown authority financed it."

Pharaoh asked his director of police: "What about the magicians' corpses?"

He said, "My men hung them in public squares and markets to terrify the people. We will spread a rumour that Pharaoh will kill whoever had anything to do with the plot."

Then Pharaoh asked the commander of the army, "What does the army say?"

He said, "The army hopes that commands will be issued to move in whatever direction Pharaoh desires."

Pharaoh said, "The role of the army has not come yet. Its role will come."

Pharaoh fell silent. Haman, the Prime Minister, moved and raised his hand to speak. Pharaoh permitted him and Haman asked, "Will we leave Musa عليه السلام and his people to corrupt the rest of the people on the earth so that they leave your worship?"

Pharaoh said, "You read my thoughts, O Haman. We will kill their sons, destroy their women, and conquer them." He issued commands, and Pharaoh's men rushed to slay the sons, destroy the women, and imprison whoever objected to these acts.

Musa عليه السلام stood watching what was happening. He could not interfere, nor did he have the power to forbid these acts. All he could do was to advise his people to be patient. He ordered them to ask Allah the

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Almighty for a calamity on the Egyptians. He pointed out to them the model of the Egyptian magicians who endured for Allah's sake without complaint. He helped them to understand that Pharaoh's soldiers behaved on earth as if they were its private owners.

Pharaoh's terrorism infused the children of Israel with a spirit of defeat. They complained to Musa عليه السلام:

They said, 'We were persecuted before you came to us and after you have come to us.' He said, 'Hopefully your Lord will destroy your enemy and make you successors in the land, then He will see how you act.'

(Ch 7:129 Quran)

Musa عليه السلام began to face a difficult situation. He had to confront Pharaoh's anger and his plots, while at the same time he had to deal with the mutiny of his people. In the midst of all this, Qarun moved. Qarun was one of the people of Musa عليه السلام. He was very rich and lived in a magnificent mansion. He wore only the most expensive clothes. Numerous slaves waited on him and he indulged in every known luxury. His enormous wealth made him arrogant. Qarun treated the poor with contempt and told them that their poverty was due to their lack of intelligence. He believed that what he owned was due to his own cleverness and business ability.

Musa عليه السلام reminded Qarun to pay alms (zakat) on his wealth, a portion of which was rightfully due to the poor. Alms are compulsory upon all the believers. Qarun was annoyed by this advice and told Musa عليه السلام that his being wealthy was proof that he was favoured by Allah, Who approved of his life-style and increased his wealth daily. Musa عليه السلام argued with him and warned him of the result of his wicked thoughts.



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When Qarun did calculate the alms due on his wealth, he was shocked at the large amount he had to part with. He not only refused to give alms, but spread a rumour that Musa عليه السلام had invented the law of zakat for his own gain. He even bribed the people to oppose Musa عليه السلام and to spread wicked rumours about him.

He said, 'This is given to me because of the knowledge (I have) with me.' Did he not know that Allah had destroyed, from the generations before him, those who were stronger than him in power and greater than him in multitude? And the sinners have not to be asked about their sins. Then (once) he came out before his people in his embellishment. Said those who are desirous of the worldly life, 'Would that we had the like of what Qarun has been given! He is a man of great fortune indeed.' And said those who were given knowledge, 'Woe to you, Allah's reward is much better for him who believes and acts righteously. But this is given to none but to those who observe restraint.' Then We made him and his home sink into the earth. So there was no group for him who could help him against Allah, nor was he one of those who could defend themselves. And those who wished to be in his position the day before, started saying, 'Oh, it seems that Allah extends provision to whom He wills and straitens (for whom He wills). Had Allah not favoured us, He would have made us sink (too). Oh, it seems that the infidels do not succeed.'

(Ch 28:78-82 Quran).



## Prophet Brothers – 4

### The believer's help and signs from Allah تبارك وتعالى

When the Egyptians and children of Israel examined the miracle punishment to Qarun, the conflict between Musa عليه السلام and Pharaoh again reached a crisis because Pharaoh believed that Musa عليه السلام was threatening his kingdom.

Pharaoh was afraid that the people would be misled by Musa عليه السلام. He suggested to his ministers and notable men that Musa عليه السلام be killed. It is said that Haman supported the idea along with a front of disbelievers. It was on the verge of approval, except for the vote of one of the notable men of the state, whose name is not mentioned in the Quran. The Quran says only that this man was a believer.

Allah Ta'ala revealed their dialogue:

And Pharaoh said, 'Let me kill Musa, and let him call his Lord. I am afraid that he will change your religion or he will cause havoc to appear in the land.' And Musa said, 'I have sought protection of my Lord and your Lord from every arrogant man who does not believe in the Day of Reckoning.' And said a believing man from the House of Pharaoh who had kept his faith secret, 'Would you kill a man because he says – 'Allah is my Lord' – while he has come to you with clear signs from your Lord? If he is a liar, his lie will fall back on himself, and if he is truthful, some of that (punishment) of which he warns you will afflict you. Indeed, Allah

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does not give guidance to anyone who is transgressor, a liar. O my people, the kingdom is yours today, while you are dominant on the land. But, who is going to help us against Allah's punishment, if it comes upon us?' Pharaoh said, 'I do not give you an opinion unless I myself believe it to be correct, and I do not direct you to anything but to the right way.' Said he who had believed, 'I fear for you something like a day of the (disbelieving) groups (of the past), like the fate of the people of Nuh and 'Aad and Thamud and those who were after them – and Allah does not intend to do any injustice to His servants. And O my people, I fear for you a day in which people will call one another, a day when you will turn back on your heels, having no one to save you from Allah – but, whomever Allah lets go astray, for him there is no one to guide.

And Yusuf had already come to you earlier with clear signs, but you remained in suspicion about what he brought to you – until when he died, you said, 'Allah will never send a messenger after him.' That is how Allah lets go astray anyone who crosses limits and lives in doubt, – those who quarrel in Allah's verses without any authority having reached them. It is terribly hateful with Allah and with those who believe. That is how Allah stamps a seal on the entire heart of an arrogant tyrant. And Fir'awn (Pharaoh) said, 'O Haman, make a tower for me, perhaps I could reach the ways – the ways to the heavens, and peek towards the God of Musa. And indeed I deem him a liar.' That is how his evil deeds were made attractive to Fir'awn, and (how) he was held back from the way. The evil design of Fir'awn was (to end) in nothing but ruin. And said he who had believed, 'O my people, follow me, I will show you the path of guidance. O my people, this life of the world is only a (momentary) benefit, while the Hereafter is, indeed, the place of permanent living. The one who does something evil will not be punished but in its equal proportion, but the one who does a righteous deed, be he male or female, while he is a

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believer, then, such people will enter the Jannah (Paradise) where they will be provided with bounties beyond reckoning. And O my people, what is wrong with me that I call you to salvation and you call me to the Fire? You invite me to reject my belief in Allah and ascribe to Him partners about whom I have no knowledge, while I invite you to (Him who is) the Mighty, the Most-Forgiving. It is obvious that those (gods) to whom you are inviting me are not worth calling, neither in this world nor in the world to come, and that we have to return back to Allah, and that the transgressors are indeed the people of the Fire. Soon you will remember what I am saying to you. And I entrust my matter with Allah. Surely, Allah has all (His) servants in sight.' Then Allah saved him from the evils of what they designed, and the House of Pharaoh was encircled by an evil punishment. (Ch 40:26-45 Quran)

Musa عليه السلام repeated his demand that Pharaoh release the children of Israel from slavery. In response, Pharaoh called his subjects, including the children of Israel, to a huge gathering where he reminded them that he was their lord and provided all their needs. Musa عليه السلام, he said, had neither gold amulets nor angels following him; he was just a poor man.

Being a people who had been oppressed for a very long time, they lacked vision. Their judgment was limited to what they could see in the material world. They regarded their ruler to be wealthy and able to provide all their worldly needs. In ignorance, they obeyed Pharaoh and ignored the call of Musa عليه السلام. Allah commanded Musa عليه السلام to warn Pharaoh of a punishment in this world for his faithlessness and his persecution of the children of Israel. As a portent of the punishment which Allah would meet out, the Nile did not flood its banks to soak the dry land as it normally did. As a result, crops failed, leading to famine. However Pharaoh remained arrogant, so Allah تبارك وتعالى caused a huge flood, which devastated the land.

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As often as they were troubled grievously, they appealed to Musa عليه السلام thus:

Whenever a scourge befell them, they said, 'O Musa, pray for us to your Lord by the covenant He has made with you. If you remove the scourge from us, we will truly believe in you, and will send the children of Isra'il with you.' (Ch 7:134 Quran)

Musa عليه السلام prayed to his Lord and He relived the suffering caused by the flood. The surging water ceased and withdrew from the land, and it became cultivatable. But when Musa عليه السلام bade them to fulfil their promise to release the children of Israel, they did not respond.

Allah Ta'ala tells us:

And We seized the people of Pharaoh with years of famine and poor production of fruits, so that they may learn a lesson. When good times came to them, they said, 'This is our right.' And if an evil touched them, they took it as an ill omen of Musa and those with him. Listen, their ill omen lies with Allah only, but most of them do not know. They said, 'Whatever sign you bring to us to enchant us with, we are not going to believe in you.' So We sent upon them the storm and locusts and lice and frogs and blood, as signs distinct from each other. Yet they showed arrogance, and they were a guilty people. (Ch 7:130-133 Quran)

Almighty Allah also said:

But when We removed the scourge from them for a term they had to reach, in no time they started to break their promise. (Ch 7:135 Quran)

Pharaoh became more arrogant and haughty. He proclaimed to his people. "Pharaoh is the only god. Has he not the kingdom of Egypt and rivers flowing under it?" He declared that Musa عليه السلام was a liar, a magician, and a poor man who did not wear even one bracelet of gold.

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Thus he made fool of his people, and they obeyed him. Surely they were a sinful people. So, when they provoked Our anger, We took vengeance on them, and drowned them all together, and made them a people of the past, and an example for the later generations.

*(Ch 43:54-56 Quran).*

It appeared that Pharaoh would never believe in the message of Musa عليه السلام, nor would he stop the torture of the children of Israel. Therefore, Musa عليه السلام prayed to his Lord thus:

Musa said, 'Our Lord, You have given Pharaoh and his group glamour and riches in the worldly life, so that, our Lord, they mislead (people) from Your path. Our Lord, obliterate their riches and harden their hearts, so that they may not come to believe until they witness the painful punishment.' Allah said, 'The prayer of the two of you has been granted; so stand firm, and never follow the way of the ignorant.' (Ch 10:88-89 Quran)

Allah inspired Musa عليه السلام to conduct his people of Egypt, but only a few of his people believed in his message. Allah تبارك وتعالى revealed:

Then, except some youths of his people, no one believed in Musa for the fear of Pharaoh and his group, lest he should persecute them. Pharaoh was high-handed in the land and he was of those who crossed all limits. And Musa said, 'My people, if you have believed in Allah, then, in Him place your trust if you are obedient.' So, they said, 'In Allah we have placed our trust: Our Lord, do not make us a victim of the unjust people, and save us, through Your mercy, from the disbelieving people.

*(Ch 10:83-86 Quran)*



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## Prophet Brothers – 5

### Pharaoh's fate and the disobedient followers

Almighty Allah ﷻ decided to put an end to Pharaoh's crimes after He had given him several chances. Allah commanded Musa ﷺ to depart, and the children of Israel received reluctant permission from the Pharaoh to go out of the city for the feast. They prepared themselves to leave Egypt. This later became known as Exodus. They carried with them their jewels and borrowed a lot of jewels from the Egyptians.

In the darkness of night, Musa ﷺ led his people towards the Red Sea, and in the morning they reached the beach. By then Pharaoh was aware of their departure, so he mobilized a huge army to pursue them.

The impatient children of Israel soon became agitated and Yusha, Ibn Nun, exclaimed: "In front of us is this impassable barrier, the sea, and behind us the enemy; surely death cannot be avoided!"

Musa ﷺ replied that he would wait for further guidance from Allah ﷻ. These words filled them with some hope, but man is always impatient for results: they were willing to surrender themselves back into slavery. At that moment Allah revealed to Musa ﷺ: "Smite the sea with your staff!" Musa ﷺ did as he was commanded. A fierce wind blew, the sun shone brightly, and in a flash the sea parted, the crests of the waves standing like mountains on each side.

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Musa عليه السلام led his people across. This miracle proved oft-repeated claim of Musa عليه السلام. "Verily! My Lord is with me!" As they looked back, they saw Pharaoh and his army approaching, about to take the very path which had been opened for them. In great fear and panic, they pleaded with Musa عليه السلام to ask Allah to close the sea. However, Allah commanded Musa عليه السلام not to smite the sea with his staff again, for Allah's decree was already in action.

Pharaoh and his army had seen the miracle, how the sea had parted, but being the pretender that he was, Pharaoh turned to his men and proclaimed: "Look! The sea has opened at my command so that I may follow those rebels and arrest them!" They rushed across the parted waters, and when they were midway, Allah تبارك وتعالى commanded the sea to return to its former state.

Terror-stricken Pharaoh, realizing his end had come, declared out of fear: "I believe that there is no god worthy of worship except Allah تبارك وتعالى in Whom the children of Israel believe, and I am of those who surrender to Him." But Allah تبارك وتعالى did not accept this declaration from the tyrant, and the waters closed over him, drowning him and his entire army.

And We let the children of Isra'il cross the sea. So, Pharaoh and his troops chased them in transgression and hostility, until when he was about to drown, he said, 'I believe that there is no god but the One in whom the children of Isra'il believe, and I am among those who submit to Allah.' (Allah said,) 'Is it now (that you have come to believe) while you were rebellious all along, and you were among the mischief-makers? So, today, We shall save your body, so that you may become a sign for those after you. And many of the people are heedless of Our signs.' (Ch 10:90-92 Quran)



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The curtain fell on Pharaoh's tyranny, and the waves threw his corpse up to the western seashore. The Egyptians saw him and knew that their gods whom they worshipped and obeyed were mere slaves who could not keep death away from their own necks.

In spite of Pharaoh's death, he left a bad influence on the souls of the children of Israel. It was difficult for the years of oppression and intense humility to pass easily. He had made them accustomed to humbling themselves and submitting to someone other than Allah تبارك وتعالى. He had so suppressed their souls and spoiled their nature that they began to torture Musa عليه السلام out of ignorance and obstinacy.

The miracle of the parting of the sea was still fresh in their minds, damp sea sand was still stuck on their soles, when they passed by a people worshipping idols. Instead of manifesting their indignation at the idolaters' oppression of the intellect by celebrating the praises of Allah تبارك وتعالى for His guidance, they looked to Musa عليه السلام for him to specify a god for them to worship as those other people did. They were jealous of the other people and their idols, and they desired the same. They missed the ancient idolatry which they had lived with during the reign of Pharaoh.

The children of Israel were favoured with Allah's grace and bounty. They were saved from oppression and had witnessed the drowning of their cruel ruler Pharaoh. When they needed water in the dry land, Allah تبارك وتعالى commanded Musa عليه السلام to strike a rock, which parted and sent forth twelve springs of water for the twelve different tribes so that they need not dispute over a shortage of water.

Allah Ta'ala says:

When Musa sought water for his people, We said, 'Strike the rock with your staff.' And twelve springs gushed forth from it. Each group of

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people came to know their drinking place. 'Eat and drink of what Allah has provided, and do not go about the earth spreading disorder.'

And when you said, 'Musa, we will no longer confine ourselves to a single food. So, pray for us to your Lord that He may bring forth for us of what the earth grows — of its vegetable, its cucumbers, its wheat, its lentils and its onions.' He said, 'Do you want to take what is inferior in exchange for what is better? Go down to a town, and you will have what you ask for.' Then they were stamped with disgrace and misery, and they returned with wrath from Allah. That was because they used to deny the signs of Allah, and would slay the prophets unjustly. That was because they disobeyed and transgressed all limits. (Ch 2:60-61 Quran)

Allah had also directed Musa عليه السلام to lead them to the Promised Land (Palestine) which had been promised to Ibrahim عليه السلام as a land in which the pious and Allah-fearing of his offspring would live and uphold Allah's law. The children of Israel were an ungrateful people. In spite of all of Allah's favours, they could not stay away from evil and continued to reject Allah's Laws. When Musa عليه السلام ordered them to conquer the town of the Canaanites the Hittites (their enemies who had hounded them), the children of Israel were cowardly and made excuses, "O Musa عليه السلام, a great people dwell therein, we will not go in unless they leave." Ancient books tell that they were six hundred thousand men. Musa عليه السلام did not find among them but two men who were ready to fight. These two said to the people, "Once we enter through the door, Allah will make us victorious." However, all the children of Israel were an incarnation of cowardice and quivered from within.

Musa عليه السلام knew that his people were fit for nothing. Pharaoh was dead, but his effect upon their souls still remained. Their recovery needed

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a long period of time. Musa عليه السلام returned to his Lord, telling Him that he was responsible only for the actions of himself and his brother. He prayed to his Lord to judge between his people and himself.

Allah تبارك وتعالى, the Exalted issued His judgment against this generation whose nature was corrupted by the Egyptians: they must wander restlessly in the wilderness until this generation had died or become senile and had created another generation, a generation which had not been defeated from within and which could fight and score victory.

Allah said, "Therefore it (this holy land) is forbidden to them for forty years; in distraction they will wander through the land. So be not sorrowful over the people who are the Fasiqeen (rebellious and disobedient to Allah)." (Ch 5:20-26 Quran)

The days of restless wandering began. Each day ended where it began and began where it ended. They started walking to no destination, day and night, morning and evening. They entered Sinai. Musa عليه السلام came to the same place where he had spoke to Allah تبارك وتعالى for the first time. He appealed to Allah تبارك وتعالى for guidance in judging over his people. Allah تبارك وتعالى instructed him to purify himself by fasting for thirty days, after which he was to go to Mount Sinai, where he would be given the law by which he would govern his people.

The ancients said that after Musa عليه السلام fasted thirty days, he hated to speak to his Lord because of the odour of his mouth. He ate a plant of the earth and then his Lord said to him, "Why did you break your fast?" Musa عليه السلام said, "O my Lord, I disliked to speak to You with my mouth not having a pleasant smell." Allah said, "Do you not know, Musa, the odour of the faster's mouth is more fragrant to Me than the rose. Go back

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and fast ten days; then come back to Me." Musa عليه السلام did what Allah تعالى commanded.

Almighty Allah تعالى declared:

And We made an appointment with Musa for thirty nights, and then We supplemented them with another ten. So, the total period fixed by his Lord was forty nights. Musa said to his brother Harun, 'Take my place among my people and keep things right, and do not follow the way of mischief makers.' When Musa came at Our appointed time and his Lord spoke to him, he said, 'My Lord, show (Yourself) to me that I may look at You. He said, 'You shall never see Me. But look at the mount. If it stays at its place, you will see Me. So when his Lord appeared to the Mount, He made it smashed, and Musa fell down unconscious. When he recovered, he said, 'Pure are You. I repent to You, and I am the first to believe (that no one can see You in this world.) He said, 'Musa, I have chosen you above all men for my messages and for My speaking (to you). So, take what I have given to you, and be among the grateful. He said, 'Musa, I have chosen you above all men for my messages and for My speaking (to you). So, take what I have given to you, and be among the grateful. I shall keep away from My verses those who show arrogance on the earth with no right to do so. Even if they were to see every sign, they would not believe in it; and if they see the Path of guidance, they do not take it as their way; and if they see the path of misguidance, they would take it as their way. That is because they have rejected Our signs, and have been neglectful of them. Gone to waste are the deeds of those who have rejected Our signs and the meeting of the Hereafter. They will be recompensed only for what they have been doing.' (Ch 7:142-147 Quran)

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Earlier scholars said that The Ten Commandments of the Torah are included in two verses of the Quran. Say:

Say (O Prophet to the infidels), 'Come, and I shall recite what your Lord has prohibited for you: Do not associate anything with Him (as His partner); and be good to parents, and do not kill your children because of poverty – We will give provision to you, and to them as well – and do not go near shameful acts, whether they are open or secret; and do not kill a person whom Allah has given sanctity, except rightfully. This He has enjoined upon you, so that you may understand. Do not approach the property of the orphan, except with the best possible conduct, until he reaches maturity. Give full measure and full weight in all fairness – We do not obligate anyone beyond his capacity – and be just when you speak, even though the one (against whom you are speaking) is a relative; and fulfil the covenant of Allah. This is what He has enjoined upon you, so that you may observe the advice.' (Ch 6:151-152 Quran)



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# Sugary solution

Frederick Banting discovered a way to remove and use the pancreatic “juice” of animals to save the lives of diabetic humans. This hormone is called insulin. Its discovery has saved millions of human lives. Diabetes used to be a death sentence. There was no known way to replace the function of a pancreas that had stopped producing insulin. Banting’s discovery changed all that.

Al though insulin is not a cure for diabetes, this discovery turned the death sentence of diabetes into a manageable malady with which millions of people live healthy and normal lives.

In early 1921, 28-year-old Canadian orthopaedic surgeon Frederick Banting developed a theory—actually, it was more of a vague idea—for a way to help people suffering from diabetes.

The outer cells of the pancreas produced strong digestive juices. But the inner cells produced a delicate hormone that flowed straight into the blood. Muscles got their energy from sugars in the blood stream, which came from food. But the body couldn’t pull sugar out of the blood stream without that hormone from the inner cells of the pancreas.

When the inner cells of a person’s pancreas stopped making that hormone, their muscles couldn’t draw sugar from the blood stream, and

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the blood stream became overloaded with sugar and struggled to get rid of it through excess urination. The body dehydrated; and the patient became deathly ill. This condition was called diabetes.

In 1920 there was no cure for diabetes. It was always fatal.

Researchers had tried obtaining the pancreatic hormone (which they referred to as "juice") from animals. But when a pancreas was ground up, the digestive juices from the outer cells were so strong that they destroyed the delicate juice from the inner cells before it could be used.

Banting read an article by Dr. Moses Barron that described the fate of several patients in whom a block age had developed in the ducts carrying pancreatic outer cell digestive juices to the stomach. These strong acids had been trapped in the outer cells of the pancreas and had destroyed those cells. The cells literally shut down and dried up.

Banting wondered if he could intentionally kill the outer pancreatic cells of an animal and then harvest its inner cell juice for use by diabetic humans.

His plan was simple enough. Operate to tie off the ducts from a dog's pancreatic outer cells to the stomach, wait the eight weeks Dr. Barron had mentioned in his article, and hope that the outer cells had dried up and died. Finally, in a second operation, he would harvest the dog's pancreas and see if it still contained life-giving inner cells and their precious juice.

He would artificially create diabetes in another dog and see if the pancreatic fluid from the first dog could keep it alive.

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With no funding, Banting talked his way into the use of a lab and six test dogs. The surgery was simple enough. Now he had to wait eight weeks for the outer cells to die.

However, early in week six the diabetic dog slid into a coma. This was the last stage before death. Banting couldn't wait any longer. He operated on one of the other dogs, successfully removing its pancreas. He ground up this tissue and extracted the juice by dissolving it in a chloride solution.

He injected a small amount of this juice into the diabetic dog. Within 30 minutes the dog awakened from its coma. Within two hours it was back on its feet. In five hours it began to slide back downhill. With another injection it perked up, with enough energy to bark and wag its tail.

Banting was ecstatic. His hunch had been right!

Dr. John Marcum named the juice, "insulin" during the two years that he and Dr. Banting searched for a way to create this precious juice without harming lab dogs—a feat they eventually accomplished.

In 1922 a 14-year-old boy suffering from type I diabetes was the first person to be treated with insulin. He showed rapid improvement.





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## Prophet Brothers – 6

### The fate of the dissenters and the story of the cow

Musa عليه السلام had been gone for forty days and his people were becoming restless, for they did not know that Allah تعالى had extended his time by a further ten days. Samiri, a man who was inclined towards evil, suggested that they find themselves another guide, as Musa عليه السلام had broken his promise. He said to them, "In order to find true guidance, you need a god, and I shall provide one for you."

So he collected all their gold jewellery, dug a hole in which he placed the lot, and lit a huge fire to melt it down. During the casting, he threw a handful of dust, making actions like a magician's to impress the ignorant. From the molten metal he fashioned a golden calf. It was hollow, and the wind passing through it produced a sound. Since superstition was imbedded in their past, they quickly linked the strange sound to something supernatural, as if it were a living god. Some of them accept the golden calf as their god.

Brother of Musa عليه السلام, Haroon عليه السلام, who acted as their leader in absence of Musa عليه السلام, was grieved and spoke up, "O my people! You have been deceived. Your Lord is the Most Beneficent. Follow and obey me."

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They replied, "We shall stop worshipping this god only if Musa عليه السلام returns."

Those who had remained steadfast in belief separated themselves from the pagans.

On his return Musa عليه السلام saw his people singing and dancing around the calf statue. Furious at their pagan ritual, he flung down the Tablet of the Law he was carrying for them. He tugged the beard and hair of Haroon عليه السلام, crying, "What held you back when you saw them going astray? Why did you not fight this corruption?"

Haroon عليه السلام replied, "O son of my mother, let go of my beard! The fold considered me weak and were about to kill me. So make not the enemies rejoice over me, nor put me among the people who are wrongdoers."

Anger of Musa عليه السلام began to subside when he understood the helplessness of Haroon عليه السلام, and he began to handle the situation calmly and wisely.

Allah تعالى has revealed some of the dialogue that took place between Him and Musa عليه السلام on Mount Sinai:

What has caused you to hurry before your people, O Musa? He said, 'Here they are just behind me, and I hurried towards You, my Lord, so that You be pleased.' He said, 'We have then put your people to test after you (left them) and Samiriyy has misguided them.' So, Musa went back to his people, angry and sad. He said, 'O my people, did your Lord not promise you a good promise? Did then the time become too long for you, or did you wish that wrath from your Lord befalls you, and hence you

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broke your promise to me?’ They said, ‘We did not break our promise to you of our own accord, but we were burdened with loads from the ornaments of the people; so we threw them, and thus did Samiriyy cast. Then he brought forth for them a calf, which was (merely) a body with a lowing sound. Then they said, ‘This is your god and the god of Musa, and he (Musa) erred. Have they not been seeing that it did not respond to them (even) with a word, nor did it have power to harm or benefit them? Harun had already said to them, ‘O my people, you have only been led astray with it, and your Lord is the Rahman (All-Merciful). So follow me and obey my command.’

They said, ‘We will never cease to stay with it in devotion, until Musa returns to us. He (Musa) said, ‘O Harun, what did prevent you from following me when you saw them going astray? Did you then disobey my command?’ He said, ‘O son of my mother, do not hold me by my beard, nor by my head. I feared that you would say, \_You have caused discord among the children of Isra‘il and did not observe my advice.’

He (Musa) said, ‘What then is your case, O Samiriyy?’ He said, ‘I perceived something they did not perceive. So I picked up a handful from under the footstep of the messenger. Then, I cast it. And thus my inner self tempted me.

He (Musa) said, ‘Then go away; it is destined for you that, throughout your life, you will say: \_Do not touch me. And, of course, you have another promise that will not be broken for you. And look at your god to which you stayed devoted. We will certainly burn it, then we will scatter it thoroughly in the sea.

Your God is Allah other than whom there is no god. He encompasses everything with knowledge. (Ch 20:83-98 Quran)

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However, the punishment which was imposed upon the calf worshippers was severe, death. Remember when Musa عليه السلام said to his people:

When Musa said to his people, 'My people, you have wronged yourselves by your taking the calf (as God). So, turn in repentance to your Creator, and slay yourselves. That will be better for you in the sight of your Creator. Then, He accepted your repentance. Indeed He is the Most-Relenting, the Very-Merciful. (Ch 2:54 Quran)

Musa عليه السلام returned to Mount Sinai with the seventy elders and there he communicated with Allah تبارك وتعالى. The elders heard Musa عليه السلام speaking with his Lord. (Allah تبارك وتعالى spoke to Musa عليه السلام directly.) This was, perhaps, the last miracle that they would see, and it was hoped that it would be sufficient enough to convey the religion to their hearts forever. However, the seventy elite who heard the miracles were dissatisfied. They said to Musa عليه السلام:

"Musa, we will never believe you till we see Allah openly!(Ch 2:55 Quran)

This was a tragedy that amazes one. It was a tragedy that indicated those who were hard-hearted and who continued to hold onto sensual and material concerns. Their stubborn demand was rewarded with punishing lightning bolts and a violent quaking that stupefied their souls and bodies at once, leaving them dead.

Musa عليه السلام knew what had happened to the seventy elite and was filled with sorrow. He prayed to his Lord, entreating Him to forgive them, for they were fools. Foolishness is only expiated by death. Allah عليه السلام forgave the elders and revived them after their death.

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Allah ﷻ the Exalted declared:

And Musa selected seventy men from his people for Our appointment. Later when the earthquake seized them, he said, 'My Lord, had it been Your will, You could have destroyed them earlier, and me too. Would You destroy us for what the foolish among them have done? It is nothing but a trial from You, wherewith you let go astray whom You will, and give guidance to whom You will. You are our protector, so forgive us, and have mercy on us, and You are the best among those who forgive. And write for us good in this world and in the Hereafter. We turn to You in repentance.' He (Allah) said, 'As for My punishment, I afflict with it whom I will. And My mercy extends to everything. So, I shall write it for those who guard themselves against evil, and pay Zakah, and those who do believe in Our verses, those who follow the Messenger, the Ummiyy (unlettered) prophet whom they find written with them in the Torah and the Injil, and who bids them what is fair and forbids what is unfair, and makes lawful for them good things, and makes unlawful for them impure things, and relieves them of their burden, and of the shackles that were upon them. So, those who believe in him and support him, and help him and follow the light sent down with him, \_\_ those are the ones who are successful.' (Ch 7:155-157 Quran)

It was said that among the children of Israel there lived a pious man. He was poor but very careful about how he earned the living; it had to be honestly earned. Everything that he did was done for the sake of Allah ﷻ, never for selfish gain. On his deathbed his last words were, "O Allah, I place my wife, my little son, and my only possession, a calf, in Your care." Strangely, he asked his wife to lead the calf to the forest and leave it there. He did this because he did not trust the children of Israel, for they were a selfish and greedy folk.

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After a few years when the boy had grown up, his mother told him: "Your father has left you a calf in the trust of Allah تبارك وتعالى. It must have grown into a cow by now." The son was surprised. He did not know of any calf all these years and asked his mother where it was. She replied, "Be like your father and say: 'I trust in Allah,' then go look for it."

With a rope in his hand, he went to the forest and prostrated himself before Allah, "O Allah, Lord of Ibrahim عليه السلام and Yaqoob عليه السلام and Job, return to me my father's trust." As he raised his head, he saw a cow coming towards him. It stopped submissively beside him. He tied the rope around its neck and led it to his house. The cow would not allow anyone else come near it except the young man.

The youth was as pious as his father. He earned his living by cutting wood. Whatever he earned he divided into three equal portions; one he gave to his mother, one he used for his needs, and the last he gave as charity. His nights, too, were divided into three parts; during the early part of the night he helped his mother, the middle part he devoted to the worship of Allah تبارك وتعالى, and during the last part he rested.

About this a wealthy man died, leaving behind an only son, who inherited his father's wealth. His cousins envied his good fortune, and secretly killed him so that they could inherit it.

The dead boy's other relatives came to the Prophet Musa عليه السلام and asked his help in tracing the boy's murderer. Musa عليه السلام instructed them to slaughter a cow, remove its tongue and place it on the corpse. This would reveal the murderer, he told them. They accused Musa عليه السلام of joking. He replied, "Allah تبارك وتعالى forbid that I be foolish!" They questioned him about the type of cow they should slaughter, and he said:

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"This cow is neither young nor mature, but in between the two conditions, so do as you have been commanded."

Instead of following his direction, they asked him more questions. "What colour must it be?"

He replied, "Verily, it is yellow in colour."

They still were not satisfied with his answer and asked for more details. Musa ~~عيسى~~ replied, "It is an unyoked cow; it does not plow the soil nor water the tilth, and is entirely without marks."

They went out in search of such a cow. The only one that matched the description was the one owned by the orphaned youth. They met him on the way and asked the price for which he would sell his cow. He told them he would have to consult his mother first, so they accompanied him to his house and offered her three gold coins. She refused their offer, saying that the cow was worth much more.

They were on increasing their offer and the mother kept on refusing. Finally they urged the son to speak to his mother to be reasonable. He told them: "I will not sell the cow without my mother's approval, even if you offered me its skin filled with gold!" On hearing this, his mother smiled and said: "Let that be the price: its skin filled with gold." They realized that no other cow would do; they had to have it at any price. They agreed to buy the cow and paid with its skin filled with gold.



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# Prophet Brothers - 7

## The meeting with Kidhr

One day Musa عليه السلام delivered such an impressive sermon that all who heard it was deeply moved. Someone in the congregation asked, "O Messenger of Allah, is there another man on earth more learned than you?" Musa عليه السلام replied, "No!" believing so, as Allah had given him the power of miracles and honoured him with the Torah.

However, Allah تبارك وتعالى revealed to Musa عليه السلام that no man could know all there is to know, nor would one messenger alone be the custodian of all knowledge. There would always be another who knew what others did not. Musa عليه السلام asked Allah تبارك وتعالى: "O Allah, where is this man? I would like to meet him and learn from him." He also asked for a sign to this person's identity.

Allah تبارك وتعالى instructed him to take a fish. When the fish disappeared, he would find the man he sought. Musa عليه السلام set out on his journey, accompanied by a young man who carried the vessel with the fish. They reached a place where two rivers met and decided to rest there. Instantly, Musa عليه السلام fell asleep.

While he was asleep, his companion saw the fish wriggle out of the vessel into the river and swim away. However, he forgot to relate the



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incident to Musa عليه السلام. When he awoke, they continued their journey until they were exhausted and hungry. Musa عليه السلام asked for his morning meal. Only then did his companion recall that the fish they had brought with them had gotten away. Hearing this, Musa عليه السلام exclaimed, "This is exactly what we are seeking!"

They hurriedly retraced their steps to the place where the rivers met and where the fish had jumped out. There they found a man, his face partly covered with a hood. His bearing showed he was a saintly man. He was Al-Khidr, the guide.

Allah تعالى narrates the story:

(Recall) when Musa said to his young man, 'I shall not give up until I reach the meeting point of the two seas, or else I shall go on travelling for years.'

So, when they reached the meeting point of the two seas, they forgot their fish, and it made its way into the sea as in a tunnel.

When they went further, he said to his young man, 'Bring us our morning meal; we have, indeed, had much fatigue from this journey of ours.'

He said, 'You see, when we stayed at the rock, I forgot the fish. It was none but Satan who made me forget it to tell you about it – and it made its way into the sea in an amazing manner.'

He said, 'That was what we were looking for. So they returned, retracing their footsteps.'

Then they found one of Our servants whom We blessed with mercy from Us and whom We gave knowledge, a knowledge from Our own.

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Musa said to him, 'May I have your company so that you teach me some of the rightful knowledge you have been given.'

He said, 'You can never bear with me patiently. And how would you keep patient over something your comprehension cannot grasp?'

He (Musa) said, 'You will find me patient, if Allah wills, and I shall not disobey any order from you.'

He said, 'Well, if you follow me, do not ask me about anything unless I myself start telling you about it.'

So, they both moved ahead, until when they boarded a boat, he sliced it (by removing one of its planks). He (Musa) said, 'Did you slice it to drown its people? In fact, you have done a terrible act.'

He said, 'Did I not say that you can never bear with me patiently?'

He (Musa) said, 'Do not hold me punishable for what I forgot, and do not make my course too difficult for me.'

So, they moved ahead until when they met a boy, he killed him (the boy). He (Musa) said, 'Did you kill an innocent soul while he did not kill anyone? You have committed a heinous act indeed.'

He said, 'Did I not tell you that you can never bear with me patiently?'

He (Musa) said, 'If I ask you about something after this, do not allow me your company. You have now reached a point where you have a valid excuse (to part with me) from my own side.'

Then, they moved ahead until they came to the people of a town; they asked its people for food, and they refused to host them. Then, they

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found there a wall tending to fall down. So he (Khadir) set it right. He (Musa) said, 'If you wished, you could have charged a fee for this. He said, 'Here is the point of parting ways between me and you. I shall now explain to you the reality of things about which you could not remain patient. As for the boat, it belonged to some poor people who worked at sea. So I wanted to make it defective, as there was a king across them who used to usurp every boat by force. As for the boy, his parents were believers. We apprehended that he would impose rebellion and infidelity upon them. We, therefore, wished that their Lord would replace him with someone better than him in piety, and more akin to affection.

As for the wall, it belonged to two orphan boys in the city, and there was a treasure beneath it belonging to them, and their father was a pious man. So your Lord willed that they should reach their maturity and dig out their treasure, as a mercy from your Lord. I did not do it on my own accord. This is the reality of things about which you could not remain patient.' (Ch 18:60-82 Quran)

Musa عليه السلام suffered terribly from his people and endured much for the sake of Allah سبحانه وتعالى. Abdullah Ibn Umar narrated, "Once the Prophet Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم distributed something (among his companions). A man said, "This distribution has not been done (with justice) seeking Allah's Countenance.' I went to the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and told him of that. He became so angry that I saw the signs of anger on his face. Then he said, 'May Allah bestow His Mercy on Musa عليه السلام, for he was harmed more (in a worse manner) than this; yet he endured patiently.'"

(Sahih Al-Bukhari, Al-Khams: 3150)

The children of Israel mistreated Musa عليه السلام a lot. His agony was not limited to mutiny, stupidity, chattering, ignorance, and idolatry; it exceeded this and went as far as inflicting personal harm on him.

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Haroon عليه السلام died shortly before Musa عليه السلام. His people were still wandering in the wilderness when he died.

Abu Hurairah narrated: "The Angel of Death was sent to Musa عليه السلام. When he came to Musa عليه السلام, Musa عليه السلام slapped him on the eye. The Angel returned to his Lord and said, 'You have sent me to a slave who does not want to die.' Allah تبارك وتعالى said, 'Return to him and tell him to put his hand on the back of an ox and for every hair that will come under it, he will be granted one year of life.' Musa عليه السلام said, 'O Lord! What will happen after that?' Allah replied, 'then death.' Musa عليه السلام said, 'Let it come now!' Musa عليه السلام then requested Allah تبارك وتعالى to let him die close to the Holy Land so that he would be at a distance of a stone's throw from it." Abu Hurairah added, "Allah's Messenger عليه السلام said, 'If I were there, I would show you his grave below the red sand hill on the side of the road.'" (Sahih Al Bukhari, Al-Janaiz: 1339)

Musa عليه السلام, Prophet of Allah and the one to whom Allah تبارك وتعالى spoke to directly, met his death with a contented soul and a faithful heart that looked forward to righteousness and made haste to meet with Him Who bore tidings of peace.



## Doers vs. Watchers

There are only two impossibilities in this world; we can try to do and be anything except becoming God and prophet. A story here is narrated for your reading pleasure and motivation.

Dr. J.B. Gambrel tells an amusing story from General Stonewall Jackson's famous valley campaign. General Jackson's army once found itself on one side of a river when it needed to be on the other side of it. The General ordered his engineers to plan and build a bridge strong enough to bear the weight of the army so that they could cross the river along with all the weapons, artillery and other things. He then went and summoned his wagon master. The general told him that it was urgent for the wagon train to cross the river as soon as possible.

Now the engineers were busy in their work and the wagon master was busy in his. He started gathering all the logs, rocks and fence rails he could find to build a bridge to cross the river. Before the first rays of sun had pierced the earth, the wagon master told General Jackson that he built the bridge. He said that not only did the wagon train cross but all the wagons and artillery had crossed the river too.

General Jackson was surprised and asked where the engineers were and what were they doing. The wagon master's only reply was that they were in "their tent drawing up plans."

It has been said that there are three kinds of people: those who make things happen; those who watch things happen; and those who don't know that anything is happening! Let us resolve not to be the ignorant ones or merely bystanders.

## The abnormal English Language – 3

There is a two-letter word that perhaps has more meanings than any other two-letter word, and that is 'UP.'

It's easy to understand UP, meaning toward the sky or at the top of the list, but when we awaken in the morning, why do we wake UP? At a meeting, why does a topic come UP? Why do we speak UP and why are the officers UP for election and why is it UP to the secretary to write UP a report?

We call UP our friends. And we use it to brighten UP a room, polish UP the silver,

We warm UP the leftovers and clean UP the kitchen. We lock UP the house and some guys fix UP the old car. At other times the little word has real special meaning. People stir UP trouble, line UP for tickets, work UP an appetite, and think UP excuses. To be dressed is one thing, but to be dressed UP is special.

And this UP is confusing: A drain must be opened UP because it is stopped UP. We open UP a store in the morning but we close it UP at night.

We seem to be pretty mixed UP about UP! To be knowledgeable about the proper uses of UP, look the word UP in the dictionary. In a

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desk-sized dictionary, it takes UP almost 1/4th of the page and can add UP to about thirty definitions. If you are UP to it, you might try building UP a list of the many ways UP is used. It will take UP a lot of your time, but if you don't give UP, you may wind U P with a hundred or more. When it threatens to rain, we say it is clouding UP When the sun comes out we say it is clearing UP.

When it rains, it wets the earth and often messes things UP.

When it doesn't rain for awhile, things dry UP

One could go on and on, but I'll wrap it UP, for now my time is UP, so..... it is time to shut UP...!

Oh . . . one more thing:

What is the first thing you do in the morning & the last thing you do at night? UP



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# The Los Amigos Fiasco -1

I used to be the leading practitioner of Los Amigos. Of course, everyone has heard of the great electrical generating gear there. The town is widespread, and there are dozens of little townlets and villages all around, which receive their supply from the same centre, so the works are on a very large scale. The Los Amigos folk say they are the largest on earth, but then we claim that for everything in Los Amigos except the jail and the death-rate. Those are said to be the smallest.

Now, with so fine an electrical supply, it seemed to be a sinful waste of hemp that the Los Amigos criminals should perish in the old-fashioned manner. And then came news of the electrocutions in the East, and how the results had not after all been as instantaneous as had been hoped. The Western Engineers raised their eyebrows when they read of the puny shocks by which these men had perished, and they vowed in Los Amigos that when an irreclaimable came their way he should be dealt handsomely by, and have the run of all the big dynamos. There should be no reserve, said the engineers, but he should have all that they had got. And what the result of that would be none could predict, save that it must be absolutely blasting and deadly. Never before had a man been so charged with electricity as they would charge him. He was to be smitten by the essence of ten thunderbolts. Some prophesied combustion, and some disintegration and disappearance. They were waiting eagerly to settle the question by actual demonstration, and it was just at that moment that Duncan Warner came that way.



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Warner had been wanted by the law, and by nobody else, for many years. Desperado, murderer, train robber and road agent, he was a man beyond the pale of human pity. He had deserved a dozen deaths, and the Los Amigos folk grudged him so gaudy a one as that. He seemed to feel himself to be unworthy of it, for he made two frenzied attempts at escape. He was a powerful, muscular man, with a lion head, tangled black locks, and a sweeping beard which covered his broad chest. When he was tried, there was no finer head in all the crowded court. It's no new thing to find the best face looking from the dock. But his good looks could not balance his bad deeds. His advocate did all he knew, but the cards lay against him, and Duncan Warner was handed over to the mercy of the big Los Amigos dynamos.

I was at the committee meeting when the matter was discussed. The town council had chosen four experts to look after the arrangements. Three of them were admirable. There was Joseph M'Connoz, the very man who had designed the dynamos, and there was Joshua Westmacott, the chairman of the Los Amigos Electrical Supply Company, Limited. Then there was myself as the chief medical man, and lastly an old German of the name of Peter Stulpnagel. The Germans were a strong body at Los Amigos, and they all voted for their man. That was how he got on the committee. It was said he had been a wonderful electrician at home, and he was eternally working with wires and insulators and Leyden jars; but, as he never seemed to get any further, or to have any results worth publishing, he came at last to be regarded as a harmless crank, who had made science his hobby. We three practical men smiled when we heard he had been elected as our colleague, and at the meeting we fixed it all up very nicely among ourselves without much thought of the old fellow who sat with his ears scooped forward in his hands, for he was a trifle hard of hearing, taking no more part in the proceedings than the gentlemen of the press who scribbled their notes on the back benches.

(Arthur Conan Doyle)

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### The Los Amigos Fiasco -2

We did not take long to settle it all. In New York a strength of some 2,000 volts had been used, and death had not been instantaneous. Evidently their shock had been too weak. Los Amigos should not fall into that error. The charge should be six times greater, and therefore, of course, it would be six times more effective. Nothing could possibly be more logical. The whole concentrated force of the great dynamos should be employed on Duncan Warner.

So we three settled it, and had already risen to break up the meeting, when our silent companion opened his mouth for the first time.

"Gentlemen," said he, "you appear to me to show an extraordinary ignorance on the subject of electricity. You have not mastered the first principles of its actions on a human being."

The committee was about to break into an angry reply to this brusque comment, but the chairman of the Electrical Company tapped his forehead to claim its indulgence for the speaker's eccentricity.

"Pray tell us, sir," said he, with an ironic smile, "what is there in our conclusions with which you find fault?"

"With your assumption that a large dose of electricity will merely increase the effect of a small dose. Do you not think it possible that it

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might have an entirely different result? Do you know anything, by actual experiment, of the effect of such powerful shocks?"

"We know it by analogy," said the chairman, pompously. "All drugs increase their effect when they increase their dose; for example--for example--"

"Milk," said Joseph M' Connor.

"Quite so. Milk. You see it there."

Peter Stulpnagel smiled and shook his head.

"Your argument is not very good," said he. "When I used to take milk, I found that one glass would excite me, but that six would send me to sleep, which is just the opposite. Now, suppose electricity were to act in just the opposite way also, what then?"

We three practical men burst out laughing. We had known that our colleague was queer, but we never had thought that he would be as queer as this.

"What, then?" repeated Peter Stulpnagel.

"We'll take our chances," said the chairman.

"Pray consider," said Peter, "that workmen who have touched the wires, and who have received shocks of only a few hundred volts, have died instantly. The fact is well known. And yet when a much greater force was used on a criminal at New York, the man struggled for some little time. Why, history tells us of men who were struck by *lightning* and survived! Do you not clearly see that the smaller dose is the more deadly?"

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"I think, gentlemen, that this discussion has been carried on quite long enough," said the chairman, rising again. "The point, I take it, has already been decided by the majority of the committee, and Duncan Warner shall be electrocuted on Tuesday by the full strength of the Los Amigos dynamos. Is it not so?"

"I agree," said Joseph M'Conner.

"I agree," said I.

"And I protest," said Peter Stulpnagel.

"Then the motion is carried, and your protest will be duly entered in the minutes," said the chairman, and so the sitting was dissolved.

The attendance at the electrocution was a very small one. We four members of the committee were, of course, present with the executioner, who was to act under our orders. The others were the United States Marshal, the warden of the jail, the chaplain, and three members of the press. The room was a small chamber, forming an annex to the Central Electrical station. It had been used as a laundry, and had an oven and boiler to one side, but no other furniture save a single chair for the condemned man. A metal plate for his feet was placed in front of it, to which ran a thick, insulated wire. Above, another wire depended from the ceiling, which could be connected with a small metallic rod projecting from a cap which was to be placed on his head. When this connection was established Duncan Warner's hour was come. (Arthur Conan Doyle)



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# Tongue Twisters - 1

Some words, sentences and phrases are such that when someone tries to speak or read them out loud, there usually is a blunder that is both funny and interesting. These types of sentences are called tongue twisters because they make the tongue twist and turn in such awkward positions that most people would prefer to stay away. You can try out these sentences for a quick and refreshing game with your friends:

1. If you understand, say "understand". If you don't understand, say "don't understand". But if you understand and say "don't understand". How do I understand that you understand? Understand!
2. I wish to wish the wish you wish to wish, but if you wish the wish the witch wishes, I won't wish the wish you wish to wish.
3. Sounding by sound is a sound method of sounding sounds.
4. A sailor went to sea to see, what he could see. And all he could see was sea, sea, sea.
5. Purple Paper People, Purple Paper People, Purple Paper People.
6. If two witches were watching two watches, which witch would watch which watch?
7. I thought a thought. But the thought I thought wasn't the thought I thought I thought. If the thought I thought I thought had been the thought I thought, I wouldn't have thought so much.

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8. Once a fellow met a fellow in a field of beans. Said a fellow to a fellow, "If a fellow asks a fellow, Can a fellow tell a fellow What a fellow means?"
9. She Sells Sea Shells On The Sea Shore, But The Sea Shells That She Sells, On The Sea Shore Are Not The Real Ones.
10. The owner of the inside inn was inside his inside inn with his inside outside his inside inn.



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### The Los Amigos Fiasco -3

There was a solemn hush as we waited for the arrival of the prisoner. The practical engineers looked a little pale, and fidgeted nervously with the wires. Even the hardened Marshal was ill at ease, for a mere hanging was one thing, and this blasting of flesh and blood a very different one. As to the pressmen, their faces were whiter than the sheets which lay before them. The only man who appeared to feel none of the influence of these preparations was the little German crank, who strolled from one to the other with a smile on his lips and mischief in his eyes. More than once he even went so far as to burst into a shout of laughter, until the chaplain sternly rebuked him his ill-timed levity.

"How can you so far forget yourself, Mr. Stulpnagel," said he, "as to jest in the presence of death?"

But the German was quite unabashed.

"If I were in the presence of death I should not jest," said he, "but since I am not I may do what I choose."

This flippant reply was about to draw another and sterner reproof from the chaplain, when the door swung open and two warders entered leading Duncan Warner between them. He glanced about with a set face, stepped resolutely forward, and seated himself on the chair.

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"Touch her off!" said he.

It was barbarous to keep him in suspense. The chaplain murmured a few words in his ear, the attendant placed the cap on his head, and then, while we all held our breath, the wire and the metal were brought in contact.

"Great Scott!" shouted Duncan Warner.

He had bounded in his chair as the frightful shock crashed through his system. But he was not dead. On the contrary, his eyes gleamed far more brightly now than before. There was only one change, but it was a singular one. The black had passed from his hair and beard as the shadow passes from a landscape. They were both white as snow. And yet there was no other sign of decay. His skin was smooth and plump and lustrous as a child's.

The Marshal looked at the committee with a reproachful eye.

"There seems to be some hitch here, gentlemen," said he.

We three practical men looked at each other.

Peter Stulpnagel smiled pensively.

"I think another one should do it," said I.

Again the connection was made, and again Duncan Warner sprang in his chair and shouted, but, indeed, was it not that he still remained in the chair none of us would have recognized him. His hair and beard had shredded off in an instant, and the room looked like a barbershop on a Saturday night. There he sat, eyes still shining, skin radiant with the glow of perfect health, but with a scalp as bald as Dutch cheese, and a chin



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without so much as a trace of down. He began to revolve one of his arms, slowly and doubtfully at first, but with more confidence as he went on.

"That jint," said he, "has puzzled half the doctors on the Pacific Slope. It's as good as new, and as limber as a hickory twig."

"You are feeling pretty well?" asked the old German.

"Never better in my life," said Duncan Warner cheerily.

The situation was a painful one. The Marshal glared at the committee. Peter Stulpnagel grinned and rubbed his hands. The engineers scratched their heads. The bald-headed prisoner revolved his arm and looked pleased.

"I think that one more shock--" began the chairman.

"No, sir," said the Marshal; "we've had foolery enough for one morning. We are here for an execution, and an execution we'll have."

(Arthur Conan Doyle)



## The Los Amigos Fiasco - 4

"What do you propose?"

"There's a hook handy on the ceiling. Fetch in a rope, and we'll soon set this matter straight."

There was another awkward delay while the warders departed for the cord. Peter Stulpnagel bent over Duncan Warner, and whispered something in his ear. The desperado started in surprise.

"You don't say?" he asked.

The German nodded.

"What! No ways?"

Peter shook his head, and the two began to laugh as though they shared some huge joke between them.

The rope was brought, and the Marshal himself slipped the noose over the criminal's neck. Then the two warders, the assistant, and he swung their victim into the air. For half an hour he hung--a dreadful sight--from the ceiling. Then in solemn silence they lowered him down, and one of the warders went out to order a coffin to be brought. But as he touched ground again what was our amazement when Duncan Warner put his hands up to his neck, loosened the noose, and took a long, deep breath.

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"Paul Jefferson's sale is goin' well," he remarked, "I could see the crowd from up yonder," and he nodded at the hook in the ceiling.

"Up with him again!" shouted the Marshal, "we'll get the life out of him somehow."

In an instant the victim was up at the hook once more.

They kept him there for an hour, but when he came down he was perfectly garrulous.

"Old man Plunket goes too much to the Arcady Saloon," said he. "Three times he's been there in an hour; and him with a family. Old man Plunket would do well to swear off."

It was monstrous and incredible, but there it was. There was no getting around it. The man was there talking when he ought to have been dead. We all sat staring in amazement, but United States Marshal Carpenter was not a man to be euchred so easily. He motioned the others to one side, so that the prisoner was left standing alone.

"Duncan Warner," said he, slowly, "you are here to play your part, and I am here to play mine. Your game is to live if you can, and my game is to carry out the sentence of the law. You've beat us on electricity. I'll give you one there. And you've beat us on hanging, for you seem to thrive on it. But it's my turn to beat you now, for my duty must be done."

He pulled a six-shooter from his coat as he spoke, and fired all the shots through the prisoner's body. The room was so filled with smoke that we could see nothing, but when it cleared the prisoner was still standing there, looking down in disgust at the front of his coat.

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"Coats must be cheap where you come from," said he. "Thirty dollars it cost me, and look at it now. The six holes in front are bad enough, but four of the balls have passed out and a pretty state the back must be in."

The Marshal's revolver fell from his hand, and he dropped his arms to his sides, a beaten man.

"Maybe some of you gentlemen can tell me what this means," said he, looking helplessly at the committee.

Peter Stulpnagel took a step forward.

"I'll tell you all about it," said he.

"You seem to be the only person who knows anything."

"I *am* the only person who knows anything. I should have warned these gentlemen; but, as they would not listen to me, I allowed them to learn by experience. What you have done with your electricity is that you have increased this man's vitality until he can defy death for centuries."

"Centuries!"

"Yes, it will take the wear of hundreds of years to exhaust the enormous nervous energy with which you have drenched him. Electricity is life, and you have charged him with it to the utmost. Perhaps in 50 years you might execute him, but I am not sanguine about it."

"Great Scott! What shall I do with him?" cried the unhappy Marshal.

Peter Stulpnagel shrugged his shoulders.

"It seems to me it does not much matter what you do with him now," said he.

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"Maybe we could drain the electricity out of him again. Suppose we hang him up by the heels?"

"No, no, it's out of the question."

"Well, he shall do no more mischief in Los Amigos, anyhow," the Marshal said decisively. "He shall go to the new jail. The prison will wear him out."

"On the contrary," said Peter Stulpnagel, "I think it much more probable that he will wear out the prison."

It was rather a fiasco, and for years we didn't talk more about it than we could help, but it's no secret now, and I thought you might like to jot down the facts in your casebook. (Arthur Conan Doyle)



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### Playing with words – 2

In a democracy it's your vote that counts; in feudalism, it's your  
Count that votes.

A chicken crossing the road is poultry in motion.

With her marriage she got a new name and a dress.

When a clock is hungry it goes back four seconds.

The guy who fell into the upholstery machine was fully recovered.

You are stuck with your debt if you can't budge it.

Local Area Network in Australia: The LAN down under.

A lot of money is tainted: 'Taint yours, and 'Taint mine.

A boiled egg is hard to beat.

He had a photographic memory which was never developed.

When you've seen one shopping centre you've seen a mall.

If you jump off a Paris bridge you are in Seine.

When she saw her first strands of gray hair she thought she'd dye.

Bakers trade bread recipes on a knead to know basis.

Acupuncture: A jab well done.

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### Smile Only - 3

Three lawyers and three engineers were travelling by train to a conference. At the station, each lawyer bought a ticket whereas the engineers bought only one ticket between them.

“How are you going to travel on a single ticket?” asked a lawyer. Wait and watch, answered one of the engineers. When they boarded the train, the lawyers took their seats, but the three engineers rammed into a toilet and closed the door behind them. Shortly after the train started, the ticket collector arrived. He knocked on the toilet door and asked, Ticket please. The door opened just a crack and a single arm emerged with a ticket in hand. The ticket collector took it and moved on. Seeing this, the lawyers decided to do the same thing on the return trip. So when they got to the station, they bought only one ticket. To their astonishment, the engineers didn't buy any. “How are you going to travel without a ticket?” asked one of the perplexed lawyers. Wait and watch, answered an engineer. In the train, the three engineers crammed into a toilet and the three lawyers into another nearby. Soon after the train started, one of the engineers got out of the toilet and walked to one where the lawyers were hiding.

He knocked on the door and said, Ticket, please.

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Maid: What do you want, sir?

Visitor: I want to see your master.

Maid: What's your business, please?

Visitor: There is a bill...

Maid: Ah! He left yesterday for his village...

Visitor: Which I have to pay him...

Maid: And he returned this morning.

A foreign tourist hired a guide to take him around Delhi and Agra. At the Red Fort at Delhi, he admired the architecture and asked how many years it took to build. Twenty years, replied the guide. You Indians are a lazy lot, the tourist said. In my country, this could have been built in five. At Agra he admired the Taj's beauty and asked how many years it took to build. Only ten years, said the guide.

The tourist retorted: You Indians are slow! We can construct such buildings in two-and-a-half. In this fashion the tourist claimed that every building he admired could have been built in his country in quarter the time. Finally, when they reached the Qutab Minar, and the tourist asked what it was, the guide replied: I don't know. It wasn't there yesterday evening.

Boy to mother: I've decided to stop studying.

"How come?" asked the mother.

I heard that that someone was shot dead, because he knew too much.

An American visiting England walked into a hotel lobby. The lift will be down presently, the receptionist told him. The lift? Said the American.



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Oh, you mean the elevator. No, I mean the lift, replied the Englishman. I think I should know what it is called, said the American. Elevators were invented in the States. Perhaps, retorted the Englishman. .But we invented the language.

The Duke of Gloucester, speaking at a luncheon in London: A home accidents survey which showed that ninety percent of accidents on staircases involved either the top or the bottom step, was fed into a computer. Asked how accidents could be reduced, the computer answered: Remove the top and bottom steps...

An eager young man entered his prospective boss's cabin for an interview; Said the boss. One thing our company is very particular about is cleanliness. I hope you wiped your shoes on the doormat while coming in? Yes, sir, the young man replied promptly.

Back came the rejoinder, .One more thing we.re very particular about is honesty. There is no doormat outside!

Customer: Why are the signs in your window so full of spelling and grammatical mistakes?

Storekeeper: So that people will think I'm a fool and come in expecting to get the best of me. Since I put up those signs, business has boomed.

Mother: .I sent my little boy for one kilo of plums and you only sent 800 grams.

Grocer: My scales are all right, madam. Have you weighed your little boy?



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### Tongue Twisters - 2

Here are some more tongue twisters to practice and amaze your friends with speed and accuracy in some hardcore tongue exercise. Be warned that these tougher than the previous part:

1. If one doctor doctors another doctor does the doctor who doctors the doctor doctor the doctor the way the doctor he is doctoring doctors? Or does the doctor doctor the way the doctor who doctors doctors? "When a doctor falls ill another doctor doctor's the doctor. Does the doctor doctoring the doctor doctor the doctor in his own way or does the doctor doctoring the doctor doctors the doctor in the doctor's way"
2. We surely shall see the sun shine shortly. Whether the weather be fine, Or whether the weather be not, Whether the weather be cold Or hether the weather be hot, We'll weather the weather Whatever the weather, Whether we like it or not. Watch whether the weather is hot. Whether the weather is cold. Whether the weather is either or not. It is whether we like it or not.
3. A flea and a fly in a flue Said the fly "Oh what should we do" Said the flea" Let us fly Said the fly" Let us flee" So they flew through a flaw in the flue.
4. If you tell Tom to tell a tongue-twister his tongue will be twisted as tongue-twister twists tongues.

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5. Mr. See owned a saw. And Mr. Soar owned a seesaw. Now See's saw sawed Soar's seesaw Before Soar saw See, Which made Soar sore. Had Soar seen See's saw before See sawed Soar's seesaw, See's saw would not have sawed Soar's seesaw. So See's saw sawed Soar's seesaw. But it was sad to see Soar so sore just because See's saw sawed Soar's seesaw.....
6. Mr Inside went over to see Mr. Outside. Mr. Inside stood outside and called to Mr. Outside inside. Mr. Outside answered Mr. Inside from inside and told Mr. Inside to come inside. Mr. Inside said "NO", and told Mr. Outside to come outside. Mr. Outside and Mr. Inside argued from inside and outside about going outside or coming inside. Finally, Mr. Outside coaxed Mr. Inside to come inside, then both Mr. Outside and Mr. Inside went outside to the riverside.



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### Ali's Sacrifice

"There! I found the moon," exclaimed six year old Ali to his father.

"Where?" asked Ali's ten year old brother, Abdullah.

"See that big tree? Its right next to it," replied Ali.

The boys were trying to see the new moon for the beginning of the Islamic month of Zulhijjah. Eid would be ten days from the day they saw the new moon.

"Oh, I see it now," said Abdullah.

"Daddy, can we go tomorrow to buy a goat?" asked Ali.

"Sure, we'll go tomorrow after the Zuhr prayer," replied their father.

The next day, all the boys got in to the car with their father. They were going to the neighbouring hills to buy a goat to slaughter on the day of Eid in commemoration of what Prophet Ibrahim (Abraham) ~~did~~, did.

"We're going to bring the goat home this time," said their father, "so you will have to take care of it and feed it. You can also play with it."

"Yahoo! I'll take care of it," said Ali, "I'll even teach it tricks!"

The boys and their father finally found a goat and took it home. The next day, Ali woke up early long before the time he used to wake up. He

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washed and dressed, then went outside to play with the goat. His brothers, Usman and Abdullah were already outside playing with the goat.

"Assalamu alaikum," they said together.

"Wa-alaikum us salam," replied Ali.

"We have decided that we will take turns to feed the goat. Everyone will take care of the goat for one day. You can be the first one to feed him," said Abdullah.

"Okay," said Ali, "where is the food?"

"Right here," replied Abdullah, pointing to the food hidden in a corner.

"Make sure, you give him enough water and hay," said Usman.

Ali then called the goat. The goat came to him obediently and ate the food. Then he drank a little water.

The boys kept on taking turns until Eid day. Many times they took it for walks around their neighbourhood.

One time, as Abdullah was getting out of his house to go for the Mughrib prayer, the goat followed him. Abdullah then had to force the goat back into the backyard, which the goat resisted very much. The boys started liking the goat very much.

After the Eid prayer, on Eid day, the family returned home. It was time to slaughter the goat.

"D-d-daddy, why are you going to k-k-kill the goat?" asked Ali, who was nearly crying, as his father sharpened his knife.

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"We have to kill him, because Allah has ordered us to," came the reply, "Every Eid-ul-Adha, Muslims all over the world, who can afford to, slaughter a goat, sheep, lamb, cow, or camel. Prophet Ibrahim, عليه السلام, was ordered by Allah to slaughter his son as a test. He was about to do that because it was Allah's order, but then Allah provided him with a ram to slaughter, and Ibrahim عليه السلام slaughtered that. (As-Safat: 101-107)

As a commemoration of that great sacrifice, Muslims are asked to slaughter an animal. You will also be slaughtering an animal when you grow up."

Ali did not reply but rather watched his father as he slaughtered the goat. Then he ran into the house, because he could not stand watching the goat die.

Abdullah went after him and explained everything to him again that his father had said before. Ali finally understood, but he still seemed sad.

The boys then helped their father in doing the rest of the work. As he kept thinking about it, Ali realized he had just learned the word "sacrifice": you give up something you love for a higher purpose. He had become happy now because he knew they had killed the goat because Allah had commanded them to do so. Then he skipped into his house and started helping his mother clear up the meat.

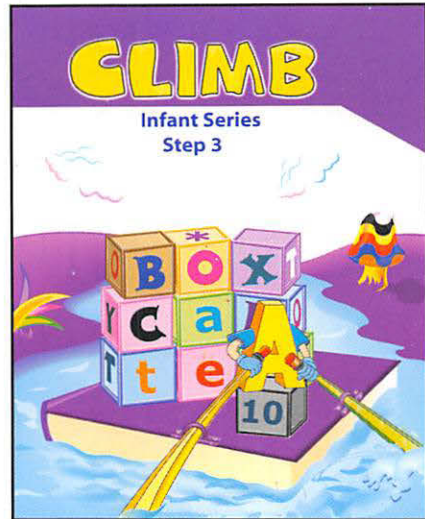
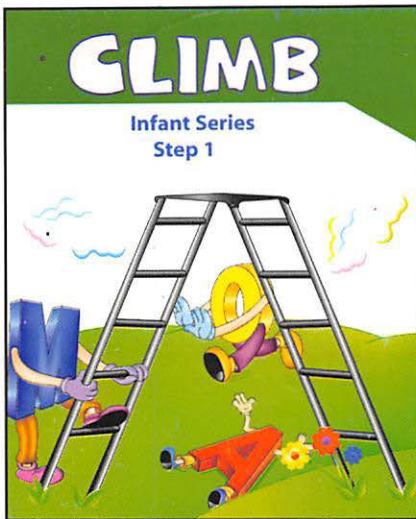
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